"The Journey Together Towards Equality." CENTRAL PA PRIDE FESTIVAL AND PARADE • JULY 26 to JULY 29

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JULY/AUGUST 2012

inside:

VOICE
july 26-29
hbg pa
PRIDE GUIDE
"The Journey Together Toward Equality"

It all started with a rejected engagement announcement of Brent Weaver and partner Jeff Clouser.

Create Change

THANK YOU
Thank You!
Celebrating outside Lancaster Newspapers' building.

By Noelle Barrett

Jeff Clouser was ready to propose to Brent Weaver. After two weeks of planning and getting permission from his partner's mother, the day finally arrived. At Grace United Church of Christ in Lancaster, Jeff sang a solo he dedicated to his partner, and as the song came to a close, his marriage proposal appeared on the overhead. Seven years to the day they met, Weaver said yes.

It sounds like many happy story book endings, but this story is far from over.

Like many engaged couples, Clouser and Weaver submitted an engagement announcement to their local newspapers. Both the Lebanon Daily News and the Boyertown Area Times would run the announcement.

But the response by Lancaster Newspapers Inc. was not one every couple receives.

On May 31, the newspaper stated it could not print the announcement because it "does not meet our Standards of Acceptance which is based on The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania laws."

"My first reaction was to ask what are these standards of acceptance," said Clouser.

continued on page 22

> "Allies need to come out of the closet.
>
> - Rev. Susan Minasian, *College Chaplain at Franklin and Marshall*

> "I was remiss in also letting you know I'm sorry for this and I do want to apologize.
>
> -Harold E. Miller, *president and CEO of Lancaster Newspapers Inc.*

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Gay Candidates Face Campaign Reality pg 7

Highspire Man Fights Homophobia Among Seniors pg 19

PRIDE: Relevant in Current Political Climate?

The Central PA Pride Festival and Parade remains as relevant as ever against the backdrop of a presidential election year. This year's theme is *"The Journey Together Towards Equality."* Both the parade and festival are sponsored by Highmark, Inc.

With President Barak Obama evolving to a supportive stance on marriage equality and his other steps to provide for inclusiveness since taking office, attendance at Pride is more than just a fun day.

Attendance is a public display of the fact that the LGBT community is here to stay and will settle for nothing less than full equality. The tired and false argument that the LGBT community wants "special rights" is finally taking its place on the historical heap of false claims made by those who want to oppress others who are different. The momentum is upon

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Political Update

Chris Dietz 1 of 20 to Receive National Endorsement

Last issue (May-June 2012) Central Voice noted on its cover that open LGBT candidates can and did win in local elections. One of those candidates, Chris Dietz, running in the 104th House District, has been endorsed by Progressive Majority, joining a small group of only 20 candidates from across the US.

Dietz is running on a platform that advocates quality education, government reform, and job creation. Other organizations endorsing Dietz include: Victory Fund, PSEA, SEIU State Council, Equality PA, Planned Parenthood PA Advocates, Central PA Building Trades, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats, Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 520, IBEW Local 143.

UN VIDEO: Punish Violence and Hatred, Not Love

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, a longtime friend of the global LGBT community, continues to advocate for acceptance and respect. Her latest effort is a video calling for an end to abuse while also using the word love in terms of our lives. Rev. Dr. Kenn Gordon, Spiritual Leader of Centers for Spiritual Living, said, "We support marriage equality. We consider marriage equality a human right and see it, therefore, not as a political question but as a spiritual one."

See featured video at thecentralvoice.ning.com

Why Is Postal Service Broke?

Bad management? Not really, if you examine the facts. Mail volume has increased even with the Internet. But in 2006, Congress requires the post office to prefund 100% of its retirement and retirement health-care costs. That's a 5 billion annual financial burden imposed on no other public or private institution in the country. As a rule, state agencies prefund about 80% of their retirement obligations. The industry average in the private sector, for Fortune 1000 companies, is about 30% - another one of those examples of whatever government does business can do better exploded. Except when they lobby for an unfair advantage against a competitor. If the idea is such sound fiscal policy, why not adopt it themselves?

Murder Up

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs has released its yearly assessment of hate violence against people who are LGBTQ or HIV-affected, and though rates of violence declined by 16 percent in 2011, the number of murders increased to 30, the highest total ever documented. It's possible, of course, that there was not an actual increase in murders, but merely in accurate reporting. Among those 30 murders, 87 percent of the victims were people of color, and 40 percent were transgender women. Young adults (ages 18-30) were almost 2.5 times more likely to experience physical violence as those age 30 and older. Countering homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in laws, police forces, and communities at large can help reduce the risk factors for this community.

Majority of Black Marylanders for Marriage Equality

A new Public Policy Polling survey says 55% of Maryland's African Americans would vote for marriage equality as a referendum if placed on the November ballot. Thirty-six percent said they oppose the measure. The polls means that support for the same-sex law among black Marylanders has increased nearly 20% since March.

The poll came less than one week after the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons, headquartered in Baltimore, endorsed marriage rights for same-sex couples and less than two weeks after President Barack Obama publicly backed the issue during an interview with ABC News' Robin Roberts. An ABC News/Washington Post poll after Obama's announcement indicated that his support of marriage rights for same-sex couples has had a significant impact on public opinion among African Americans – 59% of black respondents said they support same-sex marriage, an 18-point increase from polls that had been taken before Obama publicly backed the issue.

Nearby, Virginia Young Democrats have announcement support marriage rights for same-sex couples. The group asked the state Democratic Party to add marriage rights for same-sex couples to its 2012 platform.

Obama Backs Bullying Bills

President Obama April 20, 2012 declared his support for the Safe Schools Improvement Act and Student Non-Discrimination Act, federal legislation aimed at combating anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) bullying and discrimination in our nation's schools.

Obama Video Speaks Directly to Community

The Obama campaign has released a video narrated by actress Jane Lynch where the president speaks directly to the LGBT community and allies. The video addresses his accomplishments to date and work that still ahead.

See featured video at thecentralvoice.ning.com

Pride in the (Hershey) Park July 22

Join the region's LGBT community Sun., July 22 at Hershey Park for "Pride in the Park".

Alder Health Services, The Black and White Party and Central Voice invite readers, their friends, and family to celebrate Pride. Ride the rides, see the shows, and save some room for a fantastic picnic luncheon.

During the Day: Exclusive Pride in the Park Welcome Tent where you can stop by and pick up your tickets and t-shirts from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

Pride in the Park Picnic is from noon to 1 p.m.

Ticket to the Park - $40

Ticket to the Park and a Pride in the Park T-Shirt - $46

Ticket to the Park, and the Pride in the Park Picnic - $51

Ticket to the Park, Pride in the Park Picnic and T-Shirt - $56

You can have it all for less than regular admission to Hershey Park ($56.95).

Info: Alder Health Services, 1.800.867.1550, or email prideinthepark@alderhealth.org.

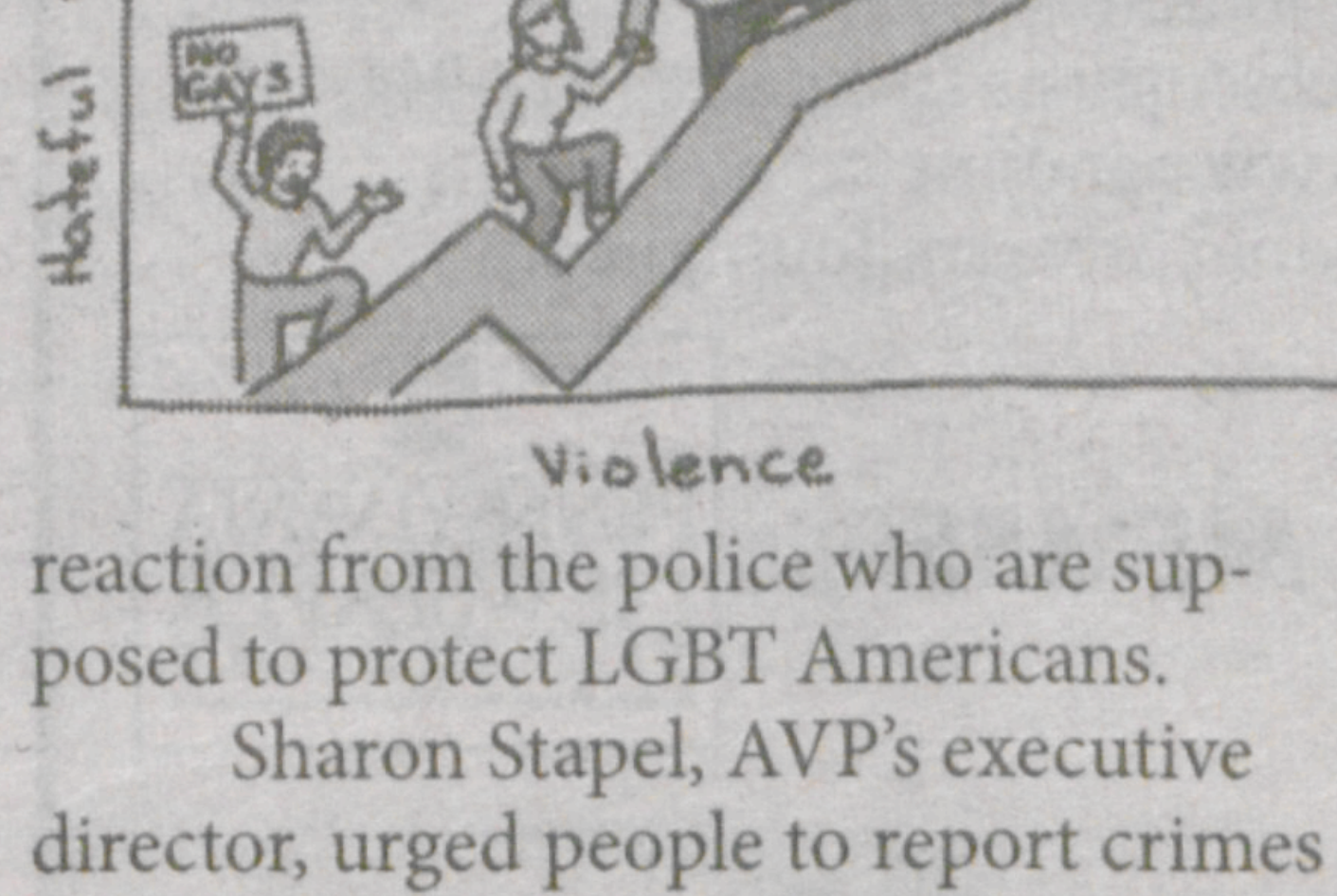
Purchase Tickets online: http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/253330

Event Sponsors: Alder Health Services, The Black and White Party and Central Voice.

Event Supporters: Capital City Bears, Susquehanna Valley Bears, The Central PA LGBT Community Center Coalition, The Pennsmen, Family First Health, MCC Vision of Hope, Pride of Central PA, Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, TransCentral PA

PRIDE IN THE PARK

NYC Sees 13% Increase in Hate Violence



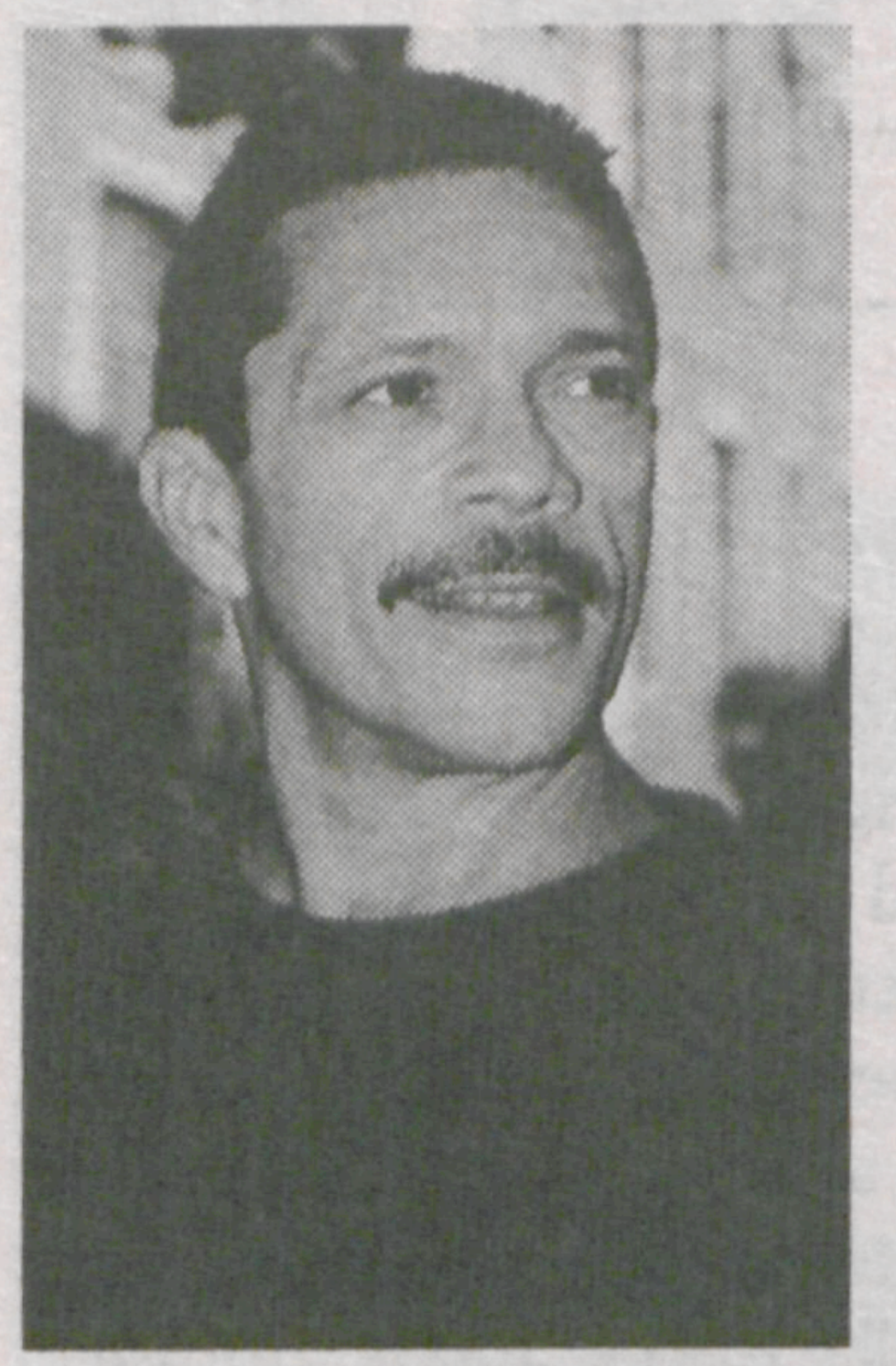
The Anti-Violence Project (AVP) released their national report on hate violence for 2011. Nationwide there was 30 killing of LGBT Americans due to hate which is "the highest yearly total ever recorded". Overall, with the exception of murder, there was a decrease in the number of hate crimes reported.

However in New York there was a significant 13% increase in hate crimes. This follows increases of 11% in 2009 and 2010. Equally as troubling is that survivors who identified as transgender saw increases of 69% in hate violence directed toward them. People of color found an increase of 25%. Complicating the situation, 62% of the survivals of hate crimes say they encountered indifferent or hostile reaction from the police who are supposed to protect LGBT Americans.

Sharon Stapel, AVP's executive director, urged people to report crimes and use the services of the AVP for support. She said, "This escalation cannot be ignored - we all have to work together to end this violence.

publisher's note

Civil Rights: Keeping the Faith



Frank Pizzoli

Tedious as it gets, defending that gay civil rights are not "special rights," but a movement to be treated fairly under the law, we must keep the faith. Our "Ally in the Academy" columnist Trum Simmons includes that adage at the bottom of his email with every piece he sends.

During Pride Season, let's aspire to remember a great quote attributed to Mahatma Gandhi: "First they ignore you, then they make fun of you, then they attack you, and then you win."

Gandhi's quote resembles what icon gay writer Edmund White shared with me in an interview for Lambda Literary Review (online).

In the 50s, homosexuality was illegal; we were invisible and despised at the same time.

In the 60s, we liberated ourselves with The Stonewall Rebellion.

In the 70s, the (mostly) men in the lgbt equation partied heavy across the land. We sadly learned that having solely defined "liberation" as "sexual freedom" only stunted our momentum. Understand that the Heterosexual Dictatorship, I believe, had as much to do with the spread of HIV back then as did the practices of my own community.

Simply stated: Underground sex became above ground commercial sex. As Susan Sontag once observed, we quickly created vast networks of venues that allowed for lots of sex, not much more. Spare me the "baths allowed for great friendships to occur," that was the exception, not the rule.

That said, I've always asked what did the Ruling Morality Party expect we'd do, especially since they wanted us to remain invisible and helplessly pathologized?

Not surprising to me that men made an art form of having sex. We did above ground with earnest abandon what the larger culture insisted we do in the dark and with shame.

We couldn't be teachers, preachers, bakers or candlestick makers, not openly. So we compensated by being the best at the one thing we knew and wanted most of all – guilt-free sex away from the shamming crowd.

My historical take is not self loathing. Why? Because as demonstrated by men's reactions to the horrors of an unnamed disease for which back then there were no treatments for what led to a hideous death – we stopped having sex once we saw what was happening.

Why is anyone surprised by what we did or what happened next?

We buried our brothers in the 80s and into the 90s before Gay Men's Health Crisis and ACT UP forced themselves into federal bureaucracies to create change, lasting change that has significantly effected how all other serious disease models now operate.

And too, resilient as we are, during this dark health crisis we rose up in an unprecedented historical way to build models of care within a shunned community. The lesbian community merged energies to care for our sick and dying, an energy the gay male community with regard to women's health concerns, has yet to return in full measure.

And still, we are a strong people.

True, health data from Centers for Disease Control show that rates of alcoholism and drug abuse, tobacco use, and depression are uniformly higher in our community than mainstream demographics. I'd like to ask the question in another way, to place the EM-phas-IS on the different SYL-ab-ILL. Why aren't more individuals experiencing negative health outcomes?

Given the daily onslaught of honking righteousness from those who think they know better than everyone else what's always best for all of us, why aren't more lgbt folks drinking alcoholically? Abusing drugs?

Because we know how to keep the faith.

Not some judgmental form of religious faith created by humans to explain how the world works, but a deep and abiding faith that social justice is achievable. That is our most precious asset. We are not a social pathology. We are a people strong in our resolve that eventually the religious and political precincts obsessed with homosexuality will be drowned out by calls for justice. Made invisible by our pride in who we are and how we find ourselves in the world.

continued on page 7

voice box

GIFT
Great article! Thank you so much for all you do to help bring awareness to our organization and so many others. You are a gift to the community!

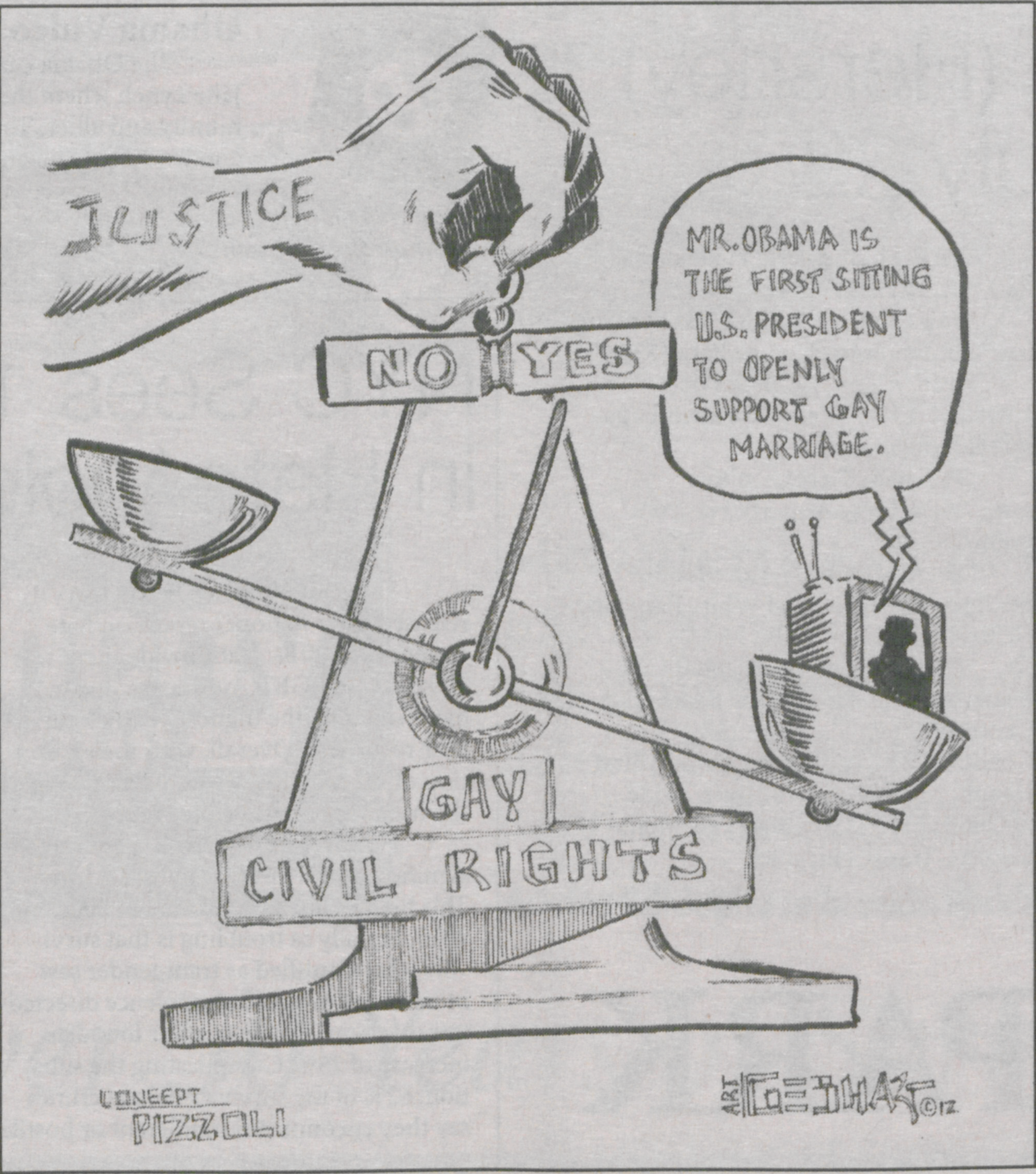
Debra L. McClain, President & CEO
Central Pennsylvania Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
"Building Business, Creating Community"

❖❖❖

If you weren't such a good editor and writer, I wouldn't have spent the last hour and a half reading Central Voice.

Reader

E-mail your thoughts to Central VOICE posops@aol.com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PUBLISHED BY
Press And Journal, Inc.
20 South Union Street
Middletown, PA
Subscriptions/Distribution 717-944-4628
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MEMBER: PENNSYLVANIA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

presidential pride *By Alan Kennedy-Shaffer*

Harrisburg HOPE

There is nothing more central to the American ideal than equal rights under the law.

* * *

By going on the record in support of marriage equality, Obama has shifted the entire debate forward.

Alan Kennedy-Shaffer
Central Voice photo

When President Barack Obama announced on May 9, 2012 that "it is important for me personally to go ahead and affirm that same-sex couples should be able to get married," he finally settled the question of just how much his presidential pride had evolved. Having entered the White House supporting civil unions but not marriage equality, Obama ultimately realized that "at root, so much of this has to do with a belief that not only are we all in this together but all of us are equal in terms of dignity and in terms of respect, and everybody deserves a shot."

In short, Obama recognized that taking a stand for same-sex marriage could not be more consistent with equality and opportunity for all.

There is nothing more central to the American ideal than equal rights under the law. The notion that the color of our skin, our gender identity and our sexual orientation are part of who we are, and not a justification for discrimination, goes to the core of whether our nation has evolved from a time when millions were enslaved, women were considered property, and only wealthy white men of Western European descent were permitted to exercise the rights of a free people. Obama's landmark decision to embrace his gay brothers and lesbian sisters is part of a long and storied history of struggle for freedom and equal rights that makes this moment so meaningful.

For the LGBT community, the gains that have been made on Obama's watch – equal benefits for federal employees in same-sex relationships, an end to the destructive "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, not using federal resources to defend bigotry in court – have been hard fought. By going on the record in support of marriage equality, Obama has shifted the entire debate forward. The issue for middle class, middle income, middle American voters is no longer whether gay Americans have rights; the issue is whether all Americans will have equal rights in the twenty-first century. Although equality has not yet been achieved, we are headed in the right direction.

Equally significant is Obama's recognition that support for marriage equality will ultimately strengthen the institution of marriage and is strengthens families, a building block of our society. Emphasizing that his decision was informed by conversations with his daughters, members of his staff, and countless leaders amplifying the calls for equality from within the LGBT community, Obama signaled a critical role for civility and dialogue in the modern political arena. Had Obama not been open to differing views, he might never have come out for marriage equality. Perhaps Mitt Romney's views would similarly evolve if he approached the issue with civility.

With a majority of Americans now supportive of marriage equality and an even greater majority supportive of gay and lesbian relationships, according to recent Gallup polls, the timing for Obama to show his support for the LGBT community could not be better. Six in ten Americans told Gallup that Obama's marriage equality announcement would make no difference in how they vote in November, and most of those who said it would make them less likely to vote for Obama are Republicans who were not likely to vote for him anyway. It is telling that even the Patriot-News editorial board recently opined that "gay marriage is one social change past due."

Critics will say that Obama came out for marriage equality now in order to win a second term as the President of the United States. The American Family Association of Pennsylvania has already denounced Obama as the "most pro-homosexual president in history" in a feeble attempt to further divide us as a nation. But such critics are on the wrong side of history. They fail to grasp, or pretend not to recognize, that recognition of same-sex marriage is a matter of legal equality and human dignity – the right of all Americans to marry the person they love, to share a life together, to raise a family together, and to be respected for it. That is the American way.

"It Gets Better" has become "It Is Getting Better." With Obama's support, it is increasingly likely that the Democratic Party will include marriage equality in the 2012 platform. I remember my Mom taking me and my brothers to gay pride marches as a young child. I remember marching in the march commemorating the 25th anniversary of Stonewall in New York City. Having organized eleven Virginia counties for Obama and the Democratic Party in 2008, it is incredibly gratifying to see Obama finally leading the charge for marriage equality. From ending "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," to supporting marriage equality, Obama is making pride presidential.

Same-sex Marriage Bans: Hating on Borrowed Time

By Garry Lenton

STRAIGHT
GAY

"Where are you going, faggot?"

That was the taunt that greeted Douglas Dockey, a 61-year-old from Highspire, as he walked down a street in State College recently. What was Dockey doing to justify the provocation?

Nothing. He was walking to a bar in State College. It just so happens this was a gay bar. You see, Dockey is gay.

But for the man who challenged him – and tried to punch him – that made it OK.

This is bigotry.

And if you don't think so, imagine the story outlined in *The Press And Journal* ("Fighting homophobia among seniors," May 30) told another way.

Let's make Dockey a black man, take him back to 1955 in the Jim Crow south, and have him walking toward a "whites only" bathroom.

"Where are you going, boy?"

Fortunately, we stopped institutionalizing racism in our public policies and constitutions half a century ago. But we haven't eradicated the virus of bigotry. We still discriminate against people for things over which they have no control. A gay man or woman doesn't choose their sexual orientation, anymore than they choose the color of their skin.

So why are so many willing to deny equal rights to millions of good human beings on the basis of, for lack of a better term, an accident of birth?

Recently, North Carolina became the 30th state to explicitly ban same-sex marriage, either by law or by amending their state's Constitution. North Carolina's amendment went farther, outlawing civil unions as well.

By contrast, same-sex marriage is currently legal in only six states and Washington, D.C.

Sadly, the Republican Party has aligned itself with those who would deny marriage rights to same-sex couples in the wrong-headed belief that doing so will strengthen its political might. But it's a short-sighted, even cynical, policy doomed to failure. True conservatives and libetarians understand that. In as little as 10 years, the GOP's positions on gay and transgender issues will be viewed as an embarrassment, assuming the party abandons its current stance before it's too late.

The future of same-sex marriage is in the polls. Voters, particularly those under 40, don't see it as an issue. And now President Barack Obama has acknowledged publicly that he personally supports same-sex marriage.

Opposition to equal rights for the gay community is literally dying out.

And that brings us back to Mr. Dockey. At 61, he is stuck in an age group that remains largely uncomfortable with people like him. And that has implications for older gay baby boomers, many of whom chose isolation and secrecy to avoid being shunned by their peers.

Dockey works with the Central Pennsylvania Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Aging Network, which is working to break down barriers for LGBT seniors.

"Ten years from now, due to health and financial situations, I could be in a nursing home," Dockey said. "That's the question I have to face. Will I be accepted?"

He might, if Pennsylvanians refuse to follow North Carolina's march to the rear and vote to provide equal rights for all its citizens. Many object to same-sex marriage on religious grounds, and that's their prerogative. No law should force churches to violate their core beliefs. But people of faith do not have the right to impose their beliefs on others through legislation.

Clergy marry people, and they have the right to refuse to marry couples on religious grounds. But keep in mind that clergy get the legal right to marry from the state. And the state should not have the right to refuse marriage to anyone based on a religious principle.

> *These proposed rules sacrifice local air quality and public health, distort energy markets, and could endanger electricity reliability in our region."*
>
> *Christina Simeone, director of the PennFuture Energy Center, a program of Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future.*

Green Groups Slam EPA on Regs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released draft proposed rules recently that would create special loopholes for dirty diesel and gas electricity generators, allowing them to avoid installing pollution controls for toxic and other air pollution emissions.

"These proposed rules sacrifice local air quality and public health, distort energy markets, and could endanger electricity reliability in our region," said Christina Simeone, director of the PennFuture Energy Center, a program of Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future.

Several years ago, EPA adopted rules limiting the amount of toxic air emissions – like formaldehyde and benzene – that are released from small diesel and gas-fired generators. EPA is now proposing to allow dirty generators to increase by six times the number of hours they may operate in electricity planning programs without any pollution controls.

"EPA's proposal would create a loophole allowing dirty generators to participate in profitable electricity market programs, giving them additional revenue while avoiding life-saving pollution controls," said Courtney Lane, senior policy analyst at PennFuture.

Supporters of the rules claim that allowing these generators to avoid pollution controls will allay concerns about electric reliability. This claim ignores reality. Electricity planning programs secure energy supply up to three years in advance, in order to ensure the grid will have enough power to be reliable in the future. It defies credulity to deem a dirty generator necessary for emergencies up to three years in advance. In fact, PJM Interconnection, the largest electric grid operator in the United States, last week released the results of its auction for generation capacity, showing more than enough supply needed to meet peak electricity needs many years into the future.

"The loophole in these rules could result in reduced reliability and will result in increased air pollution, by making the electricity system more dependent on small, dirty sources of electricity. Closing this loophole will send market signals to invest in cleaner generation and conservation while better protecting Americans' health." said John Walke, clean air director and senior attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

"Nobody gets a free pass," said Mark Kresowik, eastern region deputy director for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. "Even the local operators of the electric grid say that our energy supply is secure. Don't tell mothers that the only way to ensure a stable electric supply is to put their kids' health in danger. Owners of these dirty generators need to play by the same rules as everyone else and figure out how to make money without dumping benzene in our air and water. The technologies exist to reduce this pollution, and that's why EPA should close the loophole."

PennFuture, NRDC and the Sierra Club will be pressing the EPA to reconsider this proposed loophole in the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants program for Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines.

Commonsense Can Correct Corrections

By Gov. George M. Leader and Matthew J. Brouillette

Kyle, a convicted burglar sentenced to 1-3 years in Pennsylvania state prison, was granted parole in June 2011, but spent an extra 100 days in jail, not because he failed to serve time for his crime, but because he couldn't pay an administrative fine. According to the Department of Corrections, his due was $13.70.

For the grand sum of $13.70, Kyle was kept incarcerated, preventing him from rejoining his 4-year old daughter and the workforce that could help pay his fine. Costing taxpayers more than 100 times what he owed this bureaucratic nightmare is but one symptom of an ailing system that begs to be cured by commonsense reform.

Governor Leader

Matt Brouillette

Over the past 30 years, Pennsylvania's incarceration rate exploded by more than 500 percent to more than 50,000 inmates, requiring the construction of 18 new prisons at a cost of $200 million and millions more annually to maintain. As a result, spending on the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections grew 1,700 percent. At a cost of $35,000 per inmate per year, it is not a stretch to say taxpayers have been ill served by a system that locks up more people for longer periods, but fails to deter future crimes.

Despite this substantial investment, research demonstrates that imprisonment in state prisons does not make offenders less likely to commit crimes after release, and may even make them more likely to do so. In fact, nearly 45 percent of Pennsylvania parolees return to prison within three years, making for a "corrections" system that simply isn't correcting enough.

Ultimately, this unprecedented prison population growth was not caused by an increase in crime, but by a bureaucratic breakdown in our criminal justice system. In contrast to Pennsylvania, several states with a variety of political leanings, including New York, Florida, Texas and Hawaii, have significantly reduced both their crime and imprisonment rate over the past decade.

Some of these proven reforms require basic improvements in system efficiency. Currently, a Pennsylvania offender already granted parole serves, on average, an additional 101 days in prison. Based on average costs, taxpayers spend an extra $9,000 per inmate for this needless layover, while preventing parolees from rejoining their families and the workforce at untold costs.

Simple improvements would ensure these wasteful costs need not be borne by taxpayers and inmates in Pennsylvania. Tightening up the process of parole hearings to ensure inmates likely to be paroled are considered first, better managing drug and alcohol treatment waiting lists, and allowing inmates to pay minor fines when they can get a job outside of the prison walls would shorten these costly extra stays.

Moreover, policy changes through legislative reform need to keep low-risk cases out of prison and implement less expensive, more effective sentences. By allowing risk assessment prior to sentencing, judges and prosecutors can identify cases that would be better managed in alternative options outside of prison.

These alternative options, like electronic monitoring, have proven to be less expensive and more effective for nonviolent offenders. A Florida study found offenders on GPS monitoring were 31 percent less likely to return to prison, a statistical shift that would save Pennsylvania millions over time.

Furthermore, drug, veteran and mental health courts allow intensive judicial oversight of offenders, thus identifying those who need prison time and those who are better served with treatment and regular supervision. Several Pennsylvania counties already utilize drug and mental health courts, and expanding these problem-solving courts statewide would better remediate offenders and deter future crime.

Paramount to any successful reform, correction changes should reduce the number of individuals returning to prison after release. Graduated sanctions, where technical probation violations (not new crimes) are met with a swift and certain response - such as stricter reporting requirements, a curfew, or even a night in jail - have reduced the number of positive drug screenings and new arrests according to research submitted to the National Institute of Justice.

In Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE) model, drug offenders must make a phone call to officials every morning to see if they have to report to the court to take a drug test. If they fail, they are immediately jailed for a few days and can ultimately be imprisoned for multiple failures. HOPE reduced positive drug screens by more than 70 percent and cut both revocations and new arrests in half.

Reforming our state corrections system is not being soft on crime - it's being smart on crime. By doing so, we can ensure those like Kyle are not only punished for their crimes, but are able to pay back society by being a productive, permanent part of it.

George M. Leader, the 38th Governor of Pennsylvania and Matthew J. Brouillette, president & CEO of the Commonwealth Foundation, are two members of a trans-partisan coalition pushing for "Real Corrections Reform, Right Now." Parolee name has been changed to respect individual privacy. Learn more at CommonwealthFoundation.org/Justice.

PennFuture Opposes $1.7 billion Tax Break for Cracker Plant

Taxpayer-funded deal kept secret as Corbett calls for massive cuts in state services

Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) condemned the planned give-away of $1.7 billion in taxpayer dollars that Gov. Tom Corbett promised to Royal Dutch Shell as an inducement to build a cracker plant in Beaver County to process the wet gas from drilling in the Marcellus Shale. Shell posted $7.3 billion in profits for the first quarter of 2012 (over $80 million per day) and had more than $10 billion in cash reserves as of January 2012.

"The governor's proposal violates his own belief that the free market, and not government, should pick winners and losers," said George Jugovic Jr., president and CEO of PennFuture. "Let's be clear – by choosing to offer Shell a $1.7 billion dollar tax break while proposing to cut nearly $900 million to public education, the governor is choosing winners and losers and he has cast his lot with choosing to further help a multi-billion dollar corporation over the education of future generations of Pennsylvanians.

"The governor's proposal to give Shell tax credits worth $67 million a year for 25 years will mean that not one, but two generations of Pennsylvanians will pay be on the hook for his largesse," said Jugovic.

The apparently secret offer was uncovered today by Pete DeCoursey of Capitolwire, and confirmed to the AP's Peter Jackson by Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati's top aide.

This project has already received favorable tax treatment by the governor. Earlier this year, Corbett signed a bill to give Shell 15 years of tax cuts and exemptions by designating the plant site as an expanded Keystone Opportunity Zone. In addition, the governor led the fight to prevent the imposition of a reasonable shale gas extraction tax on the gas industry.

The governor's tax policies are inequitable in many ways. Last December, the PennFuture Energy Center detailed subsidies for fossil fuels in Pennsylvania, which included tax exemptions, tax credits, and grants that total $2.9 billion per year. "If you really want to understand a governor's priorities, look at his tax policy," stated Jugovic. "That is where the governor makes real choices – who pays and who profits."

PennFuture is a statewide public interest membership organization that advances policies to protect and improve the state's environment and economy. With offices in Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Wilkes-Barre, PennFuture's activities include litigating cases before regulatory bodies and in local, state, and federal courts, advocating and advancing legislative action on a state and federal level, public education, and assisting citizens in public advocacy.

PennFUTURE

Every environmental victory grows the economy.

Civil Rights

continued from page 4

If you think homosexuality is wrong, don't be a homosexual. It doesn't sound like a good idea for you. But also try to absorb the simple thought that you don't have the power or privilege to define what's right or wrong for every other person on the planet, at least as it relates to their adult sexuality. So knock off the tedious and predictable What's next, marrying children? rant. Doesn't apply. Best to check out your own thinking on that one.

If you think gay marriage is wrong, don't marry a person of the same sex. Not's that a difficult concept. If you're okay with civil unions but not marriage because you think it's historically sacred, read some books. It's not. But if that's your uninformed fantasy, please feel free to believe it. That's what makes this country great. You can believe what you want, fact free.

Something else makes this country great: No one of us gets to decide for others simple but significant matters like who we love or don't love. It's been tried only to fail. There was a time when folks of different races couldn't marry, because, well, that wasn't a "marriage" as some among us held. They thought they were righteous then. We call them bigots now.

No, gay civil rights and the African-American civil rights struggle are not identical by any stretch of thinking. They are also not mutually exclusive. The experience of being "other" diminishes all who experience the separation no matter how it manifests. Only the context varies. The hurt remains the same. With that in mind, let's remember to embrace all of our brothers and sisters who are outside of the community's embrace. Embrace as we ourselves want to be held.

ANALYSIS:

Candidates Face General Election

By Frank Pizzoli

Christ
SINGLETON
McEntee
STILP
PROGRESS
Experienced Leader
Chris
etz
PATTY KIM
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ROB TEPLITZ
NEW LEADERSHIP WITH THE EXPERIENCE WE NEED

"A politician thinks of the next election. A statesman, of the next generation," said James Freeman Clarke.

Political realities for five candidates in the region likely place them midway within Clarke's lofty claim. Three openly-gay candidates were successful in the last Primary election indicating that voters – themselves for, against or middle of the road on gay issues – can see beyond that singularly defining characteristic.

104th House

Not having faced a challenger from his party, openly-gay Chris Dietz handily won the Democratic primary and Nov. 6 challenges incumbent Republican State House member Sue Helm. Dietz is a 2011 FAB honoree for his service to the region's LGB T community. The district is located in Dauphin County.

Dietz tells Central Voice he's relied on tried and true campaign practices: building name recognition, raising money. "We knocked on more than 2,000 doors, mailed 3,000 voters invitations to house parties," Dietz said. He coordinated with state Senate candidate Rob Teplitz (District 15) and Stilp, 11th US Congressional District candidate. "By pooling volunteer canvassers, phone bankers, efforts multiplied, so voter contact resulted with them hearing about all three candidates," Dietz explained.

Chris Dietz

He is focused on job creation, government reform, and quality education.

On job creation and retraining, Dietz would reform two taxes: phase out the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax, which taxes corporations multiple times on earnings already been taxed. He'd also close the Delaware Loophole. "Too many Pennsylvania corporations do not pay any corporate net income tax. If each corporation would pay their fair share, we could reduce the Corporate Net Income Tax rate and bring it in line with or below other state's making us more competitive," he said.

Dietz says he likes "the idea of creating an atmosphere in which each existing business is able to hire one new employee, versus looking for that gold ticket company to relocate here and hire 500 people. The latter is a very rare situation."

Repeal of automatic Cost of Living Adjustments for state legislators are on Dietz's radar, citing such raises as "out of touch with most Pennsylvanians including state management level employees and retirees." He'd also tackle redistricting which drags on and is hyper-partisan and is not developed "with good government in mind."

"out of touch"... Dietz on legislature's automatic pay raise

Dietz would reform education through funding that "does not result school closings, increased class size, or elimination of arts, music, physical education, and kindergarten".

Dietz would generate education revenue through a cigar and smokeless tobacco tax. Pennsylvania is "one of only two states without" this luxury tax. He further explains that Texas, high in energy production, placed a 6% severance tax on natural gas production. "Pennsylvania instituted a 1% impact fee claiming the industry couldn't survive a higher tax. Meanwhile, Texas uses that revenue to help fund programs like education."

105th House

Openly-gay Kelly McEntee faces incumbent Republican Rep. Ron Marsico. Neither candidate faced a challenger from their own party for the Primary election. The district is located in Dauphin County.

In her Republican-leaning district McEntee says, "Winning is only possible with direct voter contact and through persuading Independent and Republican voters to vote for me." She notes fundraising is paramount "because some of voters must be persuaded through means that include mail."

On non-LGBT issues, she says "the middle class drives the economy, therefore job growth gets more money into their hands". She promotes job training and retraining to ease unemployment and underemployment, property tax relief through changes to income and sales tax, closing the Delaware Loophole, and having a competitive natural gas severance tax.

Kelly McEntee

"We must restore appropriate levels of public school funding for effective and efficient education for all children as required by the state Constitution," she said.

On mental health services and suicide prevention, McEntee

continued on page 8

Candidates continued from page 7

says "We have an almost invisible network for mental health services". She aims make "mental health a priority such that it equals physical health." For Pennsylvanians between 15 and 54, suicide is either the second, third, or fourth leading cause of death depending on your age group, she notes. "Since 90% of those who die by suicide have a diagnosable, and likely treatable, mental illness, we can change these statistics and save lives."

Steve Dorko

Steve Dorko, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats, says Dietz and McEntee are among 15 endorsed candidates. "We'll support endorsed candidates financially, through a Voter's Guide and through other access to voters."

Patty Kim

103rd House

Patty Kim won the Democratic primary vote for the 103rd state House seat vacated by longtime incumbent Democrat Rep. Ron Buxton. Kim tallied 29% of the vote against a crowded field of four candidates and garnered a nod the Capital Region Stonewall Democrats Voter's Guide.

At a previous Harrisburg Hope panel discussion, Kim expressed that all citizens should have the same civil rights in every way possible. When Josh Appleman, representing the LGBT Community Center, asked candidates if they would support anti-discrimination legislation regarding employment and other public accommodations, Kim said, "I'd be honored to support such legislation." She was not available for this article.

Brian Sims

182nd House

In the 182nd district Brian Sims challenged incumbent state Representative Babette Josephs. The district is a Philadelphia, center city spot described as the "gayest" state house district. Sims beat Josephs 51.6% to 48.4%. On the day of the election, Sims was named to The Advocate's Forty Under 40 list.

Central Voice asked Sims what he thinks the legislature's newly-formed LGBT Caucus can accomplish, by what timelines, strategies. Although he doesn't see a limit to LGBT Caucus achievements, Sims stress guidelines all involved parties should observe. "Right now, we work on anti-bullying legislation, hate crimes, and a statewide non-discrimination act." Touchier issues are critical - marriage, relationship recognition, adoption – but he believes "we need to begin with the first three."

Regarding marriage and/or civil unions depends, Sims says, on prevailing law when Pennsylvania is finally ready to pass some form of relationship recognition. "I have always supported full marriage equality to anything second-best like civil unions, domestic partnerships. That said, there is a case to be made that the future of relationship recognition may be for all unions to be civil unions and then, if couples choose to have unions sanctified by churches, they are free to have that done," he clarifies. "So long as we are still outsourcing unions between two consenting adults to religious institutions, and so long as marriage is the prevailing term used for those relationships, then I support full marriage equality."

Although the state Dept. of Education offers school districts resources on bullying, their use is not mandatory nor do they mention lgbt issues. A toothless tiger? "Yes, I call these beige bills. We have known for years without specific reporting requirements and without specifically enumerated classes of protected individuals, anti-bullying laws have little effect at curbing bullying," Sims says.

Rob Teplitz

15th Senate

In the hotly contested 15th Senate seat, Dauphin/York counties, vacated by longtime incumbent State Sen. Jeff Piccola, Democrat Rob Teplitz faces Republican John McNally for the Nov. 6 General election. Democratic political observers talk about taking back a Senate seat traditionally held by Republicans.

On the legislature's newly-formed LGBT Causus, Teplitz said," I'd like to learn more about the caucus and its specific agenda, but I am open to joining it. He "looks forward to having "an open and respectful dialogue on all issues of concern to the LGBT community."

When with the Senate Democratic Caucus, he has worked on legislation requiring the Attorney General and State Police to collect and report data on crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. "I would continue to pursue such legislation as a state Senator."

Teplitz supports anti-discrimination, hate crimes, and anti-bullying legislation. When working for the Senate Democratic caucus (2003-4), he worked on legislation requiring the Attorney General and State Police to collect and report data on crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. "I would continue to pursue such legislation as a state Senator."

On same-sex marriage, Teplitz believes "government should provide both same-sex and heterosexual couples in committed civil relationships equal rights and recognition. Given the religious connotation of the term "marriage," religious institutions should continue to define that term for themselves in a religious context.

Regarding the state's oft cited poor business climate, Teplitz says "to the extent the business tax climate stands in the way, we must address it." His would nurture small, locally-owned businesses and use his auditor's experience to insure tax credit recipients create and retain the jobs promised and "to make sure they pay back our money if they don't."

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making sense of life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Is Your Pride Affected or Effective?

With all the Pride events this time of year we become far more aware of the pride we feel as gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender individuals. Our straight allies likewise honor our unique take on life and how we live our lives.

We can also feel anger and resentment about our lack of basic human rights along with the pride we and our allies feel for the strides we have made over the past few decades toward equal rights. Some of us might even feel like victims, unable to move forward because of the immense oppression we often feel in expressing who we are or loving the ones with whom we partner.

Being a victim never feels good. Additionally it can act as an excuse to fail, giving us evidence of why we cannot have what we want while making others responsible for our problems. It is the difference between allowing our circumstance to create an effect we dislike instead of affecting the change we desire. The latter is definitely preferred.

"Affect" is a verb; it is something that happens. "Effect" is a noun; it is the result. How do you lead your life? Do you expect life to happen to you, meaning you are affected by the world? Or are you satisfied that you are creating a life worth living, as evidenced by the effects or results in your life?

It is not uncommon to feel affected by our surroundings. In many areas of the world conditions seem quite unfriendly to GLBTQ people. Situations can seem to control us: family; genetic factors and health; economic status in life; age; our sexual orientation; our gender; and, many other factors such as religion, race and culture. Some of these labels we share with straight people and they can be just as victimized by them as we can be.

The rules are changing in almost every area of life. Those who fear the changes we are experiencing as a species are fighting hard, sometimes to the death, to keep the status quo, even though they are often not happy with the life for which they battle. Eventually they will fail.

The natural impulse of life is to be free and at the same time to be interconnected and interdependent upon one another. This is not conflict; it is balance. Humans need to be free to think for themselves, yet we must also be able to live among one another and in harmony with our planet. Many of the rules by which we have been living for many years are artificial. They simply do not work in our modern-day global community. Most of the rules that are faulty never really did work, but because of pressure from society we have pretended that they did.

Some would have us believe that to be successful and equal we need to simply follow the rules. Stephen Covey researched all the success literature published in the U.S. since 1776. He found out that for approximately the first 150 years our country was focused on what he calls the Character Ethic: integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice, patience, industry, simplicity, modesty and the Golden Rule.

Shortly after World War I the basic view of success shifted from the Character Ethic to what he refers to as the Personality Ethic. Success became more a function of personality, a public image, of attitudes and behaviors, skills and techniques. Personality Ethic took essentially two paths: one was human and public relations techniques and the other was positive mental attitude.

I have never mastered the "power look" taught by the marketing gurus and motivational speakers. I have no desire to be intimidating to anyone. But I have lived and taught the principle of a positive mental attitude for close to 30 years. What we are communicates far more eloquently than anything we say or do, or as Emerson said, "What you are shouts so loudly in my ears I cannot hear what you say."

I believe strongly in advocacy. I have spent a fair amount of time demonstrating and protesting, and composing emails or making phone calls to local, state and federal representatives about issues dear to me. But there is something to be said for Emerson's statement when it comes to experiencing the equality we desire with the pride we claim to have. The problem is that we cannot be protesting for equality while at the same time demanding that we be treated as special. How can we justify those two conflicting desires?

It can seem like a no-win situation, but it is not. One spiritual path I have studied tells us that none of us are special and that we are all special. That seems like a paradox or just confusing nonsense. What it means is that since science is proving the ancient truth that we are all one, through a better understanding of quantum physics, then none of us can be special. Yet because no two people express life quite the same way a unique perspective is revealed through our individual understanding.

By living authentic lives we can gain acceptance into society through being who we are. And, in bringing our unique perspective as GLBTQ people into the community at large, we provide a special and valuable contribution to everyone. We will begin to experience more acceptance (equality) each day, but enjoy it in our own way (our special way of expressing life).

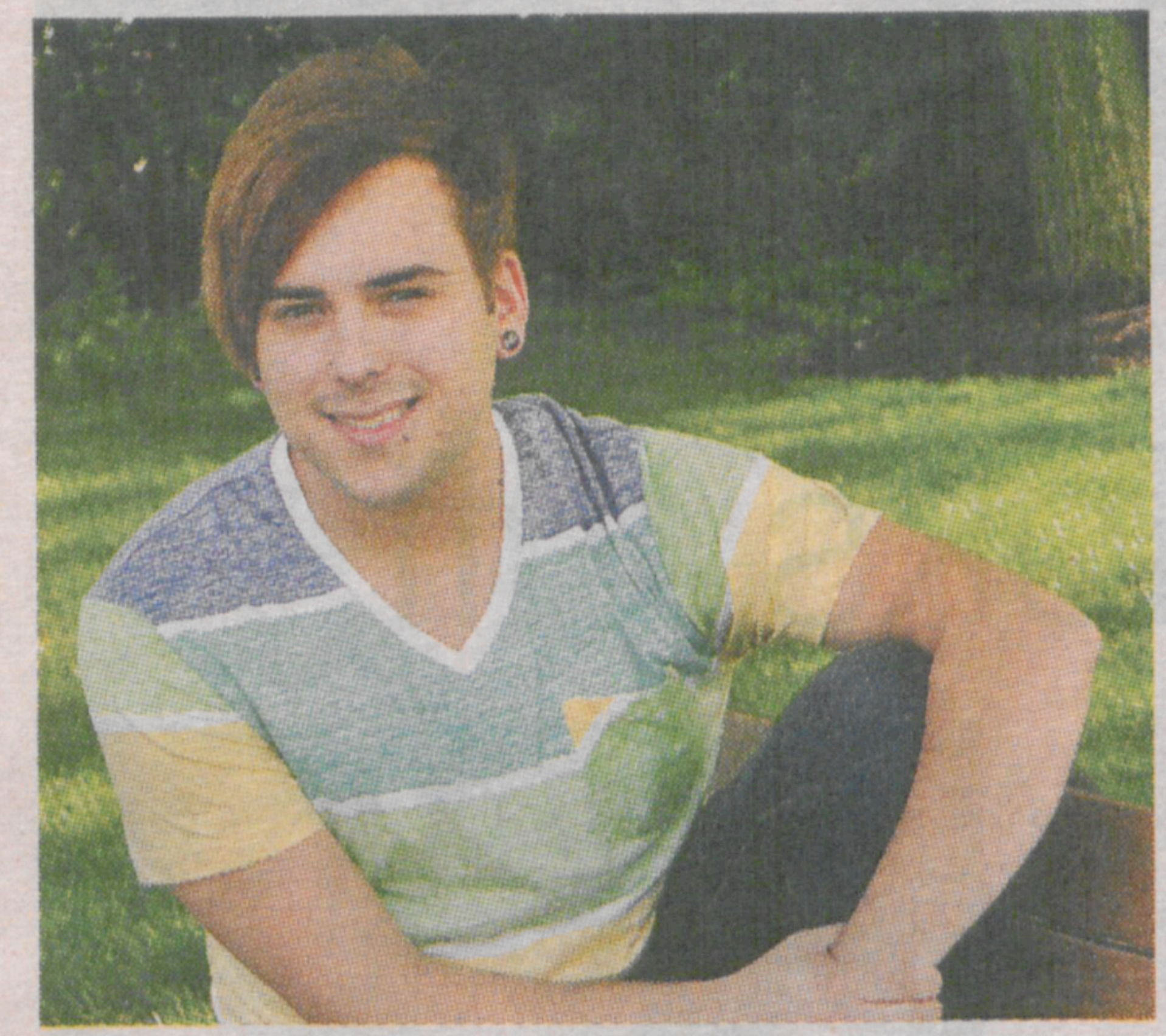
Our success in showing our pride will look different for everyone. This is not the

continued on page 13

Artist Paints for Charity

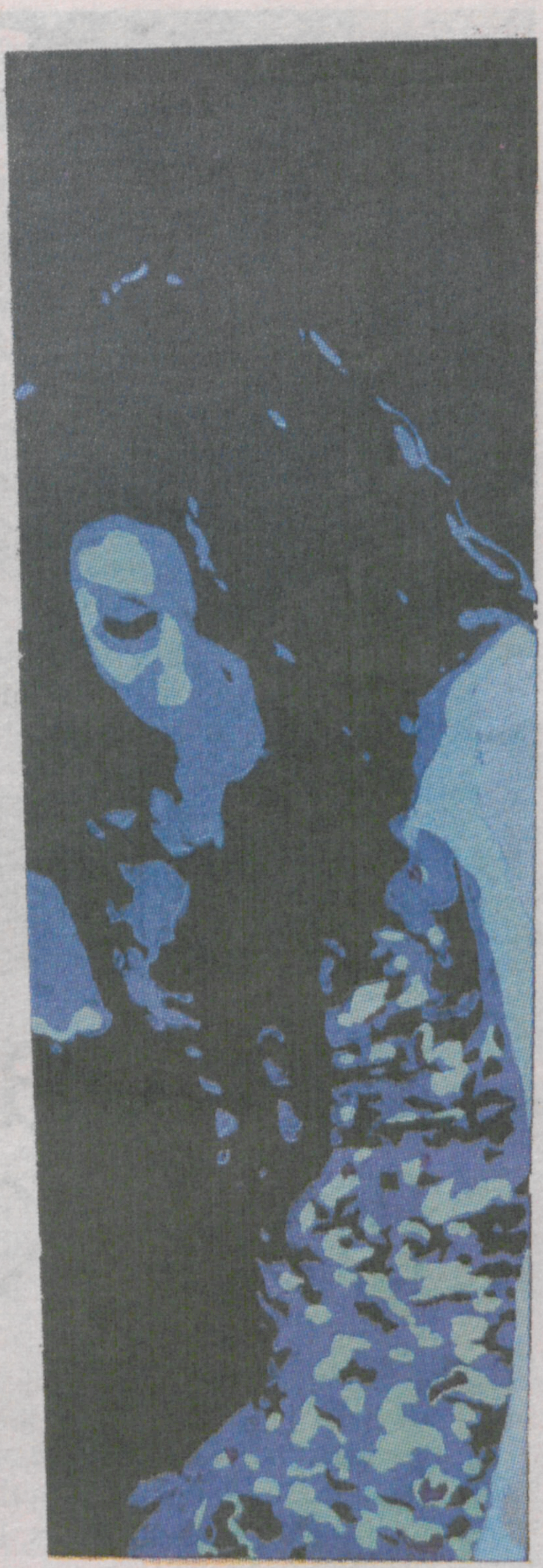
Artist Tyler Cruz, 20, studying at the Art Institute of York, has been interested in all artistic forms from a young age. "I've been doing all types of art since before elementary school," he tells Central Voice. He's also a huge fan of fashion arts.

Currently, he's working on a painting called "Sarah" in order to raise money for a Dauphin County drug and alcohol program. Full of pride in his work as the community celebrates Pride in the region, Cruz says, "When doing something for charity I always make sure I do as well as I would if I were getting paid because the more money the work sells for the more money gets donated."

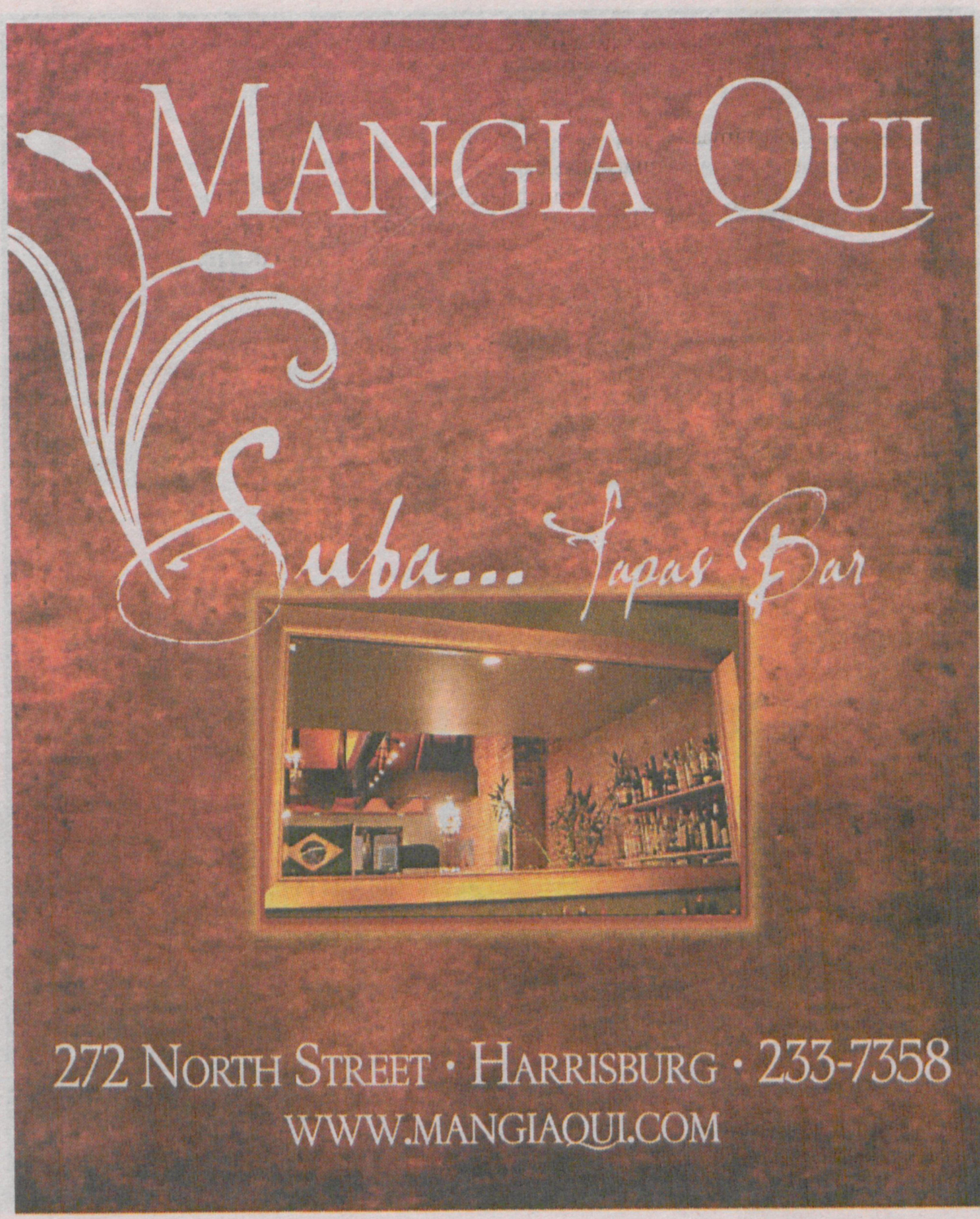


Tyler Cruz

Photo by Brittany Hrevnak



Painting called "Sarah"



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Private event

July 28 - Smokin Gunnz
Benefits: Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
fighting blood cancers

August 4 - Vinyl Groov
Benefits: American Diabetes Association.
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August 11 - Hillbilly Thunder
Benefits: Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Pennsylvania
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August 25 - Flashback Band
Benefits: Hospice of Central Pennsylvania

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* * *

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* * *

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OBAMA PRIDE
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Obama Pride Effort Kicks Off

By Frank Pizzoli

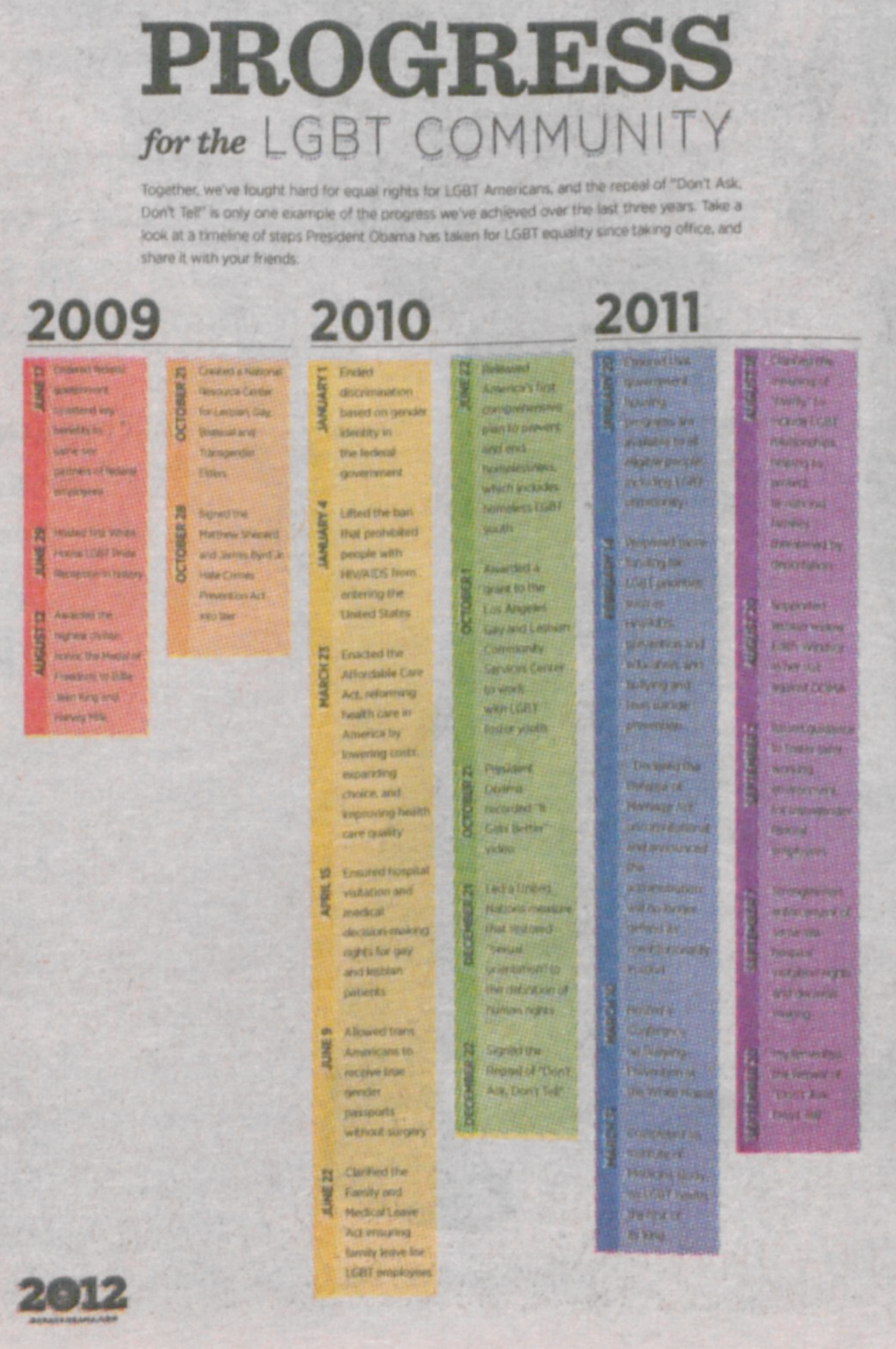
Seventeen individuals kicked off the 2012 Obama Pride effort May 23 at the Harrisburg campaign headquarters, 10 S. 3rd St., 717-793-0120.

Lead in a discussion of upcoming activities by Obama campaign organizers Russell Cox and Jennifer Storipan, the group enthusiastically talked about the main ways members of the lgbt community can engage in the campaign: assist with voter registration given the more stringent guidelines that take full effect for the November presidential election, help make calls from phone banks, attend gay events with campaign organizers and volunteers, and volunteer in general for the many tasks that a presidential campaign involves.

In Lancaster, campaign organizer Sully Pinos can direct individuals to the same activities discussed tonight in Harrisburg.

"In the long run, we're looking to create sustainable, democratic and inclusive communities around all our campaign activity," explained Cox. "We want all segments of the community, not only the lgbt community, involved for the long haul," said Storpian.

One volunteer referred to Central Voice as "the region's lgbt newspaper that is read like the Bible" in reference to where to find current information on political and election activities and other current events relating the lgbt and broader community.



PROGRESS
for the LGBT COMMUNITY

Together, we've fought hard for equal rights for LGBT Americans, and the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is only one example of the progress we've achieved over the last three years. Take a look at a timeline of steps President Obama has taken for LGBT equality since taking office, and share it with your friends.

Central Voice Photos

Prince Poppycock Wows Black and White Party!

The Black and White Party, 6th Annual, held its crowd of 375 in awe with its presentation of "Love Boat" by an all-volunteer cast from the region's theatre community. America's Got Talent's Prince Poppycock had the audience fixed in the seats as he regaled them with performance numbers that made him famous worldwide.

Central Voice Photos

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LGBT Book Club Meets Monthly

The LGBT Book Club continues to meet at The Midtown Scholar Book Store, 1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg, 5-7 p.m., third Sunday of the month.

The last selection discussed was "The Hours" by Michael Cunningham. Readers can suggest books to be read and, if chosen, are responsible to lead the discussion. Participants rely on traditional books and also use e-readers during the discussion.

Info: lgbtbookclubhbg@g.mail.com

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Fall Achievement Benefit (FAB) is a key source of funding for the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA, including its youth program Common Roads, the Central PA LGBT Aging Network (CPLAN), trainings, local GSA support and annual leadership summit, and arts and culture events focused on educating the community about LGBT people, experiences, and issues.

For information on The LGBT Community Center or to become a sponsor or advertiser of FAB 2012, please email fab@centralpalgbtcenter.org or call 717-920-9534.

LGBT Community Center of Central PA | 1306 N. 3rd St. | Harrisburg, PA 17102 | 717-920-9534 | www.centralpalgbtcenter.org

LGBT Community Center Relocates

“We are thrilled about our new home. Midtown is the perfect location for the center,” Stuart Landon, president, of the LGBT Community Center Coalition, told Central Voice.

Referring to the new location as “a vibrant village,” the center is now located at 1306 N. Third Street in Midtown Harrisburg, across from the popular and well-traveled daytime venue Broad Street Market and adjacent to Midtown Scholar Bookstore open seven days a week. The new space is being made ready for handicap accommodations.

“We’ll be working to keep the space flexible and multi-use as well as using the Midtown Scholar Bookstore community facilities as needed,” executive director Louie Marven said.

“The center will be a visible and accessible hub for lgbt activity in the region. It’s a storefront in a really exciting and bustling area of town, on a bus route, and past the parking meters of downtown,” Marven points out. Board member Jeanine Ruhsam “has done wonders reinventing the facility in no time to make it the versatile community space that we need it to be,” he said.

“Now the community has a place to call their own,” Landon said. The center has a gallery, meeting rooming, youth space, and office space and over 1,000 square feet of storage for other lgbt organizations to use.

Landon says with regard to the “build out” the center leaders were “were smart about our expenses”.

Donations can be made at www.centralpalgbtcenter.org.

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Central Voice Photos

Broad Street Market Celebrates Spring with Music

Broad Street Market vendors, shoppers, and music enthusiasts last month enjoyed the sound of a grand piano in an unlikely place. Composer/musician Neil Alexander brought his solo piano arrangement of Stravinsky’s Le Sacre Du Printemps (The Rite of Spring) to the market, 1233 North 3rd Street.

The music was widely recognizable from the “Walt Disney’s Fantasia” segment spanning Earth inception to dinosaur demise.

Next year marks the 100-year anniversary of the Paris premier of The Rite of Spring and the riotous reaction allegedly occurring on that historic night.

Alexander began an international series of centennial performances and is delighted to have the first stop be Harrisburg’s Broad Street Market.

NAACP Endorses Marriage Equality

The National NAACP has for the first time endorsed full marriage equality for LGBT Americans. In addition, the language included provisions to oppose any legislative or constitutional effort to limits the rights of the community.

Here is the resolution that was submitted by the legendary Julian Bond and passed by the entire Board of Directors:

The NAACP Constitution affirmatively states our objective to ensure the “political, educational, social, and economic equality” of all people. Therefore, the NAACP has opposed and will continue to oppose any national, state, or local policy or legislative initiative that seeks to codify discrimination or hatred into the law or to remove the constitutional rights of LGBT citizens.

We support marriage equality consistent with the full protection provided under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Is Your Pride

continued from page 8

time in human history to hide under a rock. Get out there, show your pride, and be the amazing GLBTQ person you are! Start affecting your experience of life and enjoy the spectacular effect you can have on the planet.

Dr. Terry is the spiritual leader of both Center for Spiritual Living Cumberland Valley and Unity of Harrisburg. Info: terry@newthoughtpa.org; www.newthoughtpa.org; www.unityofharrisburg.org

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NAMES Project Returns AIDS Quilt to Capital

The NAMES Project Foundation is partnering with POZ to display The Quilt in its entirety throughout Washington, DC, for the first time since 1996.

The NAMES Project Foundation, custodian of The AIDS Memorial Quilt, in partnership with POZ, the leading brand for HIV/AIDS information in the United States, is pleased to announce "Quilt in the Capital 2012," an initiative to bring the 54-ton AIDS Memorial Quilt to Washington, DC, July 21–25 to coincide with the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012).

"The AIDS Memorial Quilt has incredible power to draw people into a conversation about HIV/AIDS," said Julie Rhoad, president and CEO of The NAMES Project. "With the help of our partner POZ, we will use this summer's Quilt display to reignite the conversation about how we begin to end AIDS. Our heartfelt thanks to the many generous supporters that are making this possible."

Sponsorship and support will make it possible to bring all of The Quilt's 47,000 panels and counting—representing the lives of 94,000 individuals taken by AIDS, sewn by more than 100,000 friends and family members—to be displayed across part of the National Mall and the more than 50 additional venues in the DC metropolitan area July 21–25. For a listing of all the venues scheduled to display panels of The Quilt this summer, go to www.Quilt2012.org.

As a partner to "Quilt in the Capital 2012," POZ is working closely with The NAMES Project to leverage the power of The Quilt in developing programming that is engaging, educational and inspirational. POZ also brings its media expertise to the initiative, hosting panel discussions, conducting interviews and streaming live from The Quilt on POZ.com to bolster the engagement of a larger audience that extends beyond those viewing The Quilt in person.

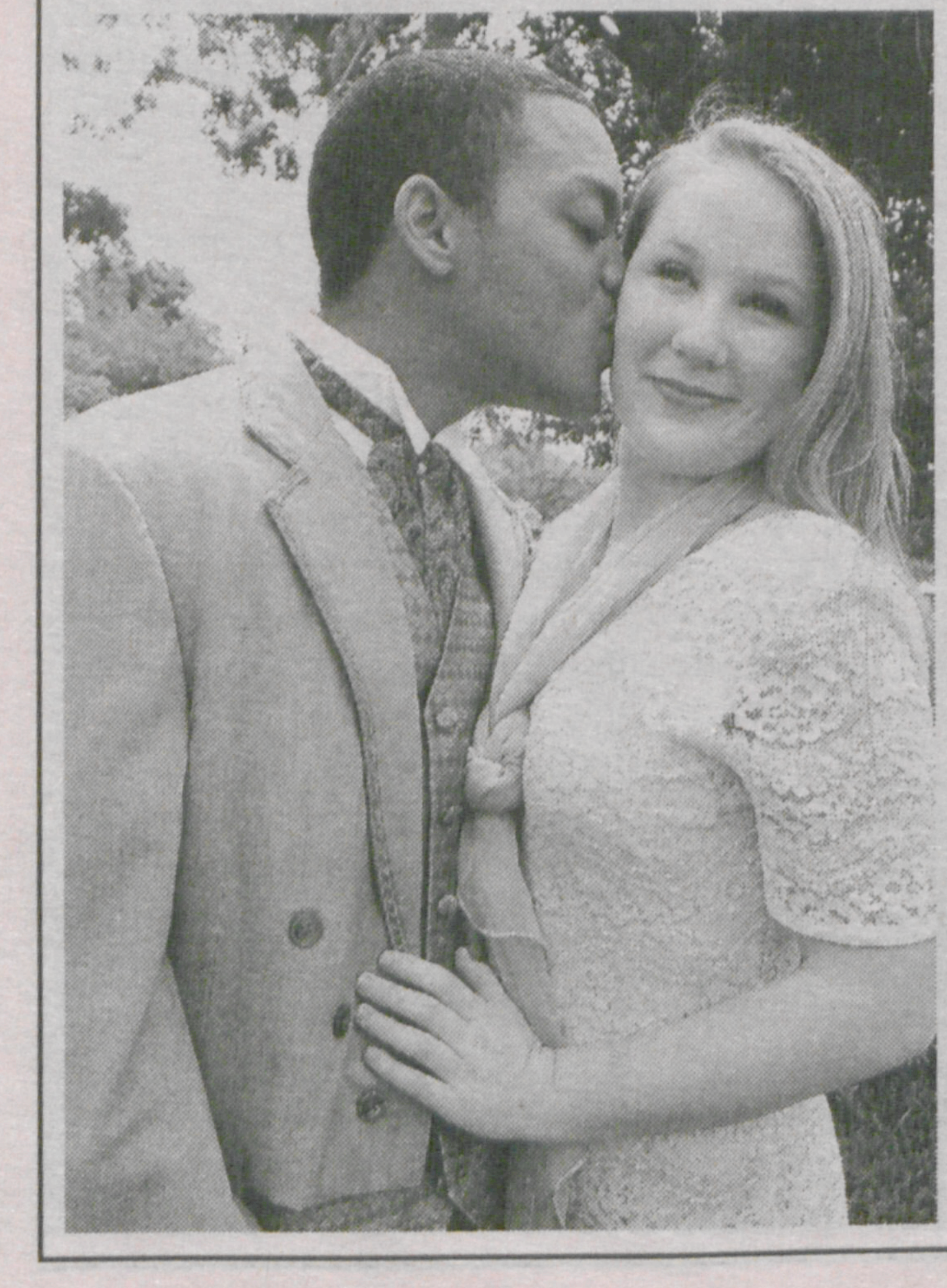
Long-time industry supporters Bristol-Myers Squibb and Merck & Co. are generously supporting "Quilt in the Capital 2012."

"For more than two decades, Bristol-Myers Squibb has worked with the HIV community, and we knew the momentous return of The Quilt to Washington, DC, an extraordinary reminder of the journey we have taken and the future ahead, is something we wanted to be a part of," said Giovanni Caforio, president, U.S. pharmaceuticals, Bristol-Myers Squibb. "The Quilt has an unparalleled ability to foster dialogue, awareness and action at every level, from breaking through national and international consciousness to serving people in need at the community level. We need to work together for people living with HIV and AIDS, and our hope is that The Quilt can inspire all people and truly help impact the course of the HIV epidemic in this country."

In addition, The NAMES Project Foundation and POZ would like to thank the Raymond F Schinazi and Family Foundation, The Elton John AIDS Foundation, The Association of Corporate Counsel, Red Thread Productions, Whitman-Walker Health, Kimpton Hotels and The DC AIDS Walk for their contributions and support.

About The AIDS Memorial Quilt

The Quilt began with a single 3 feet by 6 feet panel created in San Francisco in 1987. Today, The Quilt is the largest piece of ongoing community art in the world. Its personally sewn panels come from every state in the nation, from every corner of the globe. Sections are continuously on display across the country in schools, churches, community centers, businesses, corporations and a variety of other institutional settings, all with the purpose of making the realities of HIV and AIDS real, human and immediate. To date, more than 15 million people have seen The Quilt at tens of thousands of displays throughout the world.



Harrisburg Shakespeare Co. Celebrated 19th Year in Reservoir Park

Harrisburg Shakespeare Company in June celebrated its 19th year performing in Reservoir Park. Shown here are Jeremy Patterson as Romeo and Courtney Roy as Juliet.

Photo by Brianna Dow, www.gamutplays.org

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book review

By Lewis Maurer
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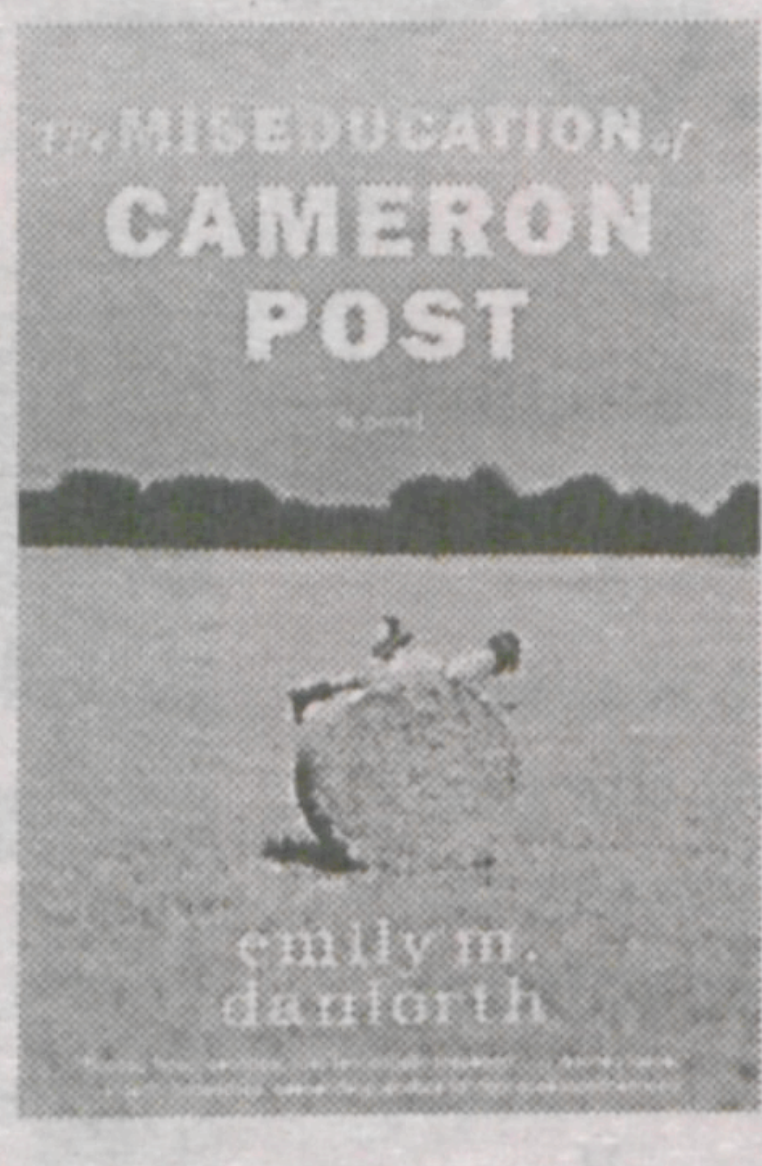


The Miseducation of Cameron Post
Emily M. Danforth

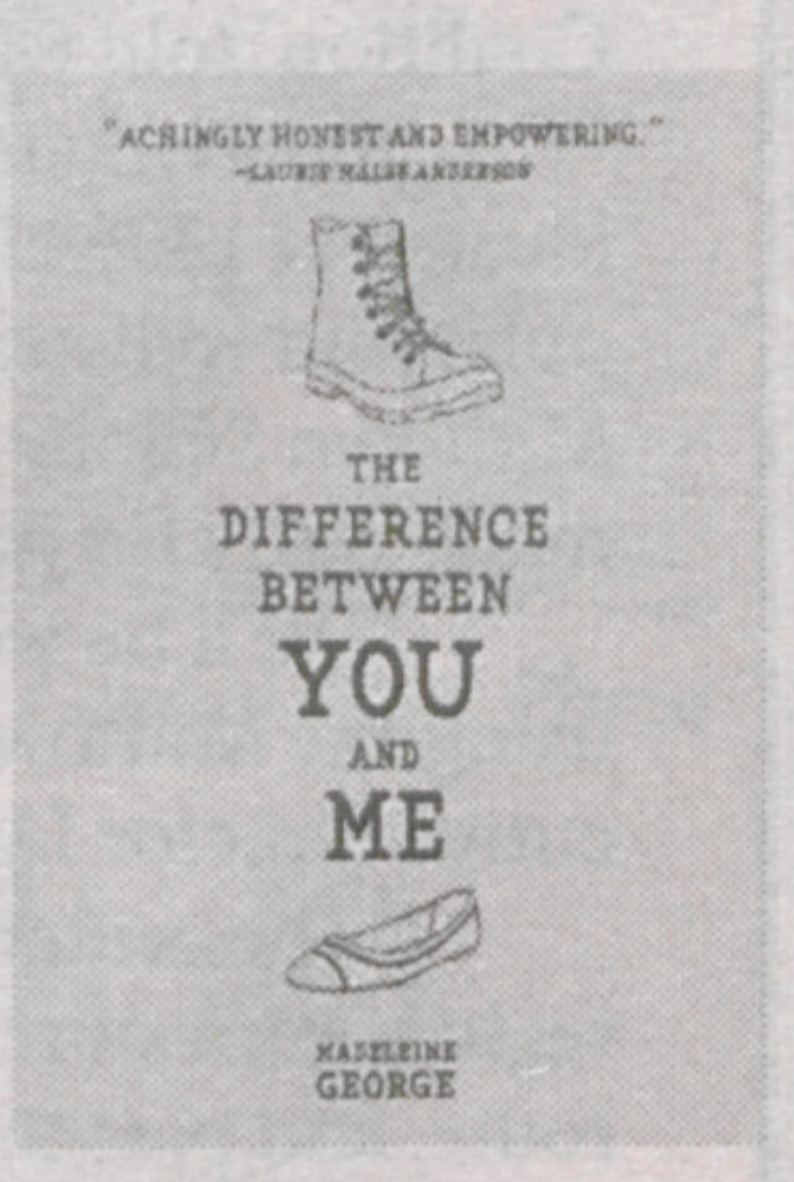
In the early 1990s, when gay teenager Cameron Post rebels against her conservative Montana Ranch town and her family decides she needs to change her ways, she is sent to a gay conversion therapy center.

The Difference Between You and Me
Madeleine George

"...this heartbreaking tale is powerfully raw..."
- Kirkus Reviews, starred review, January 1, 2012

"...especially memorable."
- Horn Book, March/April 2012

"Teens expecting a run-of-the-mill romance are in for a surprise with George's (Looks, 2008) smart, multilayered novel told in alternating viewpoints."
- Booklist, March 15, 2012



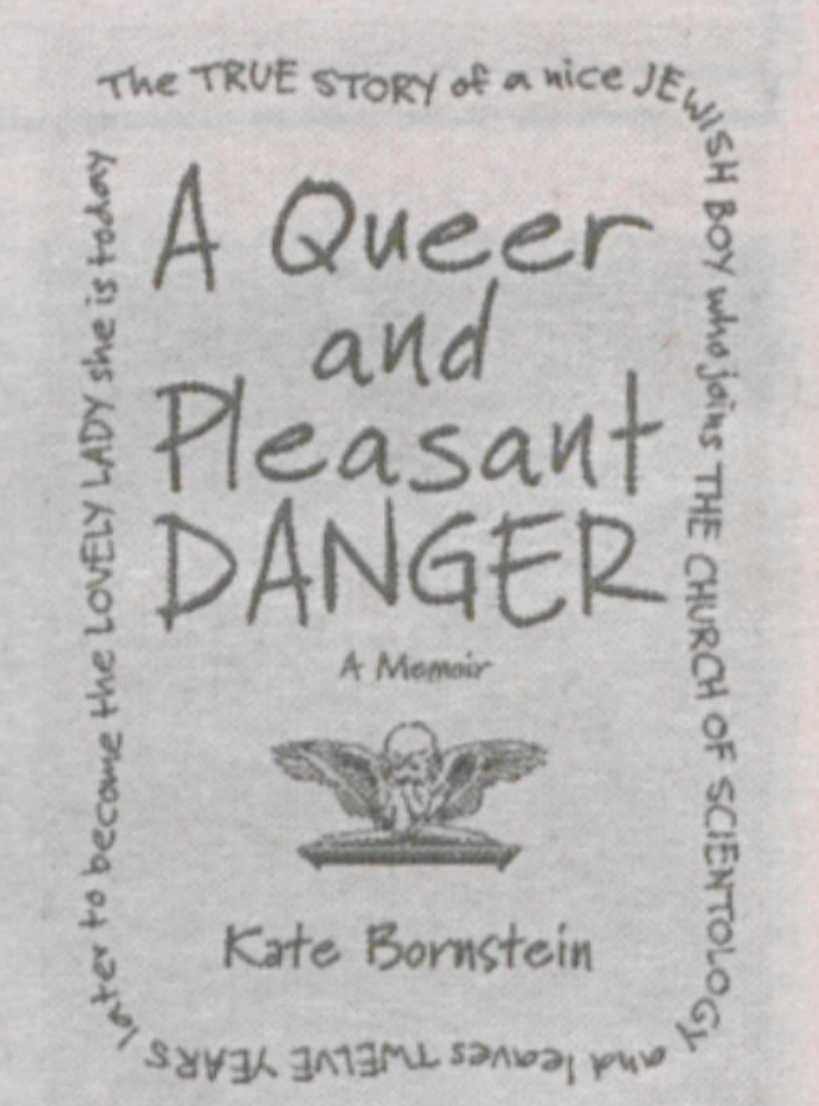
MY AWESOME AWFUL
POPULARITY
PLAN
{SETH RUDETSKY}

My Awesome/Awful Popularity Plan
Seth Rudetsky

Seth Rudetsky's first novel for young adults is endearingly human, and laugh-out-loud funny, and any kid who ever aspired to Cool U will find Justin a welcome ally in the fight for popularity.

A Queer and Pleasant Danger
Kate Bornstein

Wickedly funny and disarmingly honest, this is Bornstein's most intimate book yet. With wisdom, wit, and an unwavering resolution to tell the truth, Bornstein shares her story: from a nice Jewish boy growing up in New Jersey to a strappingly handsome lieutenant of the Church of Scientology's Sea flagship vessel, and later to 1990s Seattle, where she becomes a rising star in the lesbian community. In between there are wives and lovers, heartbreak and triumph, bridges mended and broken, and a journey of self-discovery that will mesmerize readers.


The TRUE STORY of a nice JEWISH BOY who joins THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY and leaves TWELVE YEARS later to become the LOVELY LADY she is today
A Queer and Pleasant DANGER
A Memoir
Kate Bornstein

Court Order Confirms Payroll Procedures

Dauphin County Judge Lawrence F. Clark, Jr. last month signed a court order ending a two and one-half year dispute regarding Harrisburg City payroll disbursements.

Clark made perfectly clear that Dan Miller's Controller's office has oversight in the evaluation of regular payroll disbursements. Mayor Linda Thompson had waged a long legal battle to prevent the Controller's office from determining who had final say.

"The ruling acknowledges the City Controller has authority over the disbursement of electronic payroll payments commonly referred to as direct deposit. Internal financial controls that have been absent in the city payroll processing since July 2011 will now be restored. This is a victory for good government and the citizens of Harrisburg", remarked City Controller, Dan Miller. The order will take effect in 20 days.

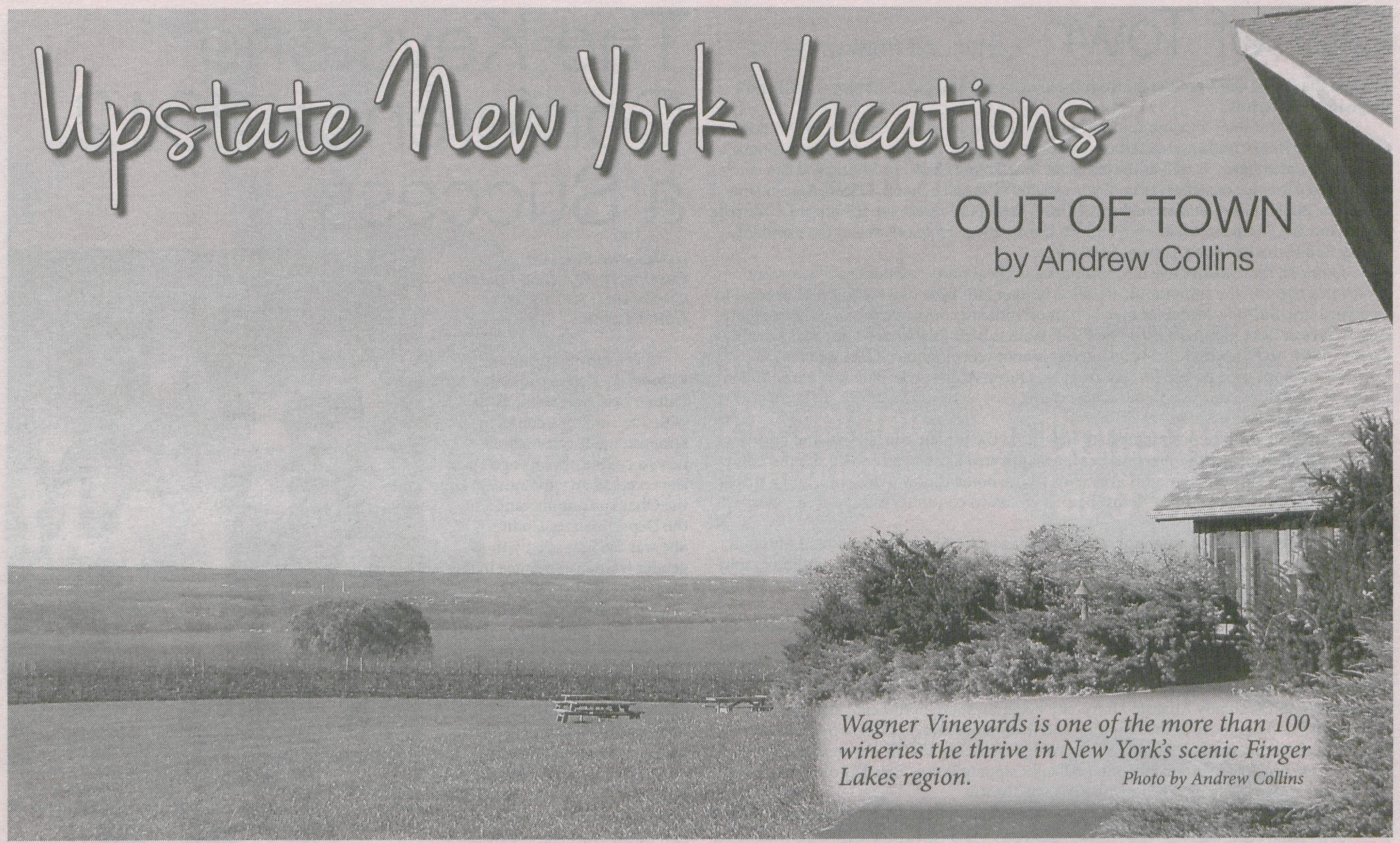
The order allows, for the first time, the Controller to approve or suspend individual direct deposit payments. This important function means that inappropriate payments can be singled out while allowing all other employees to continue to receive their direct deposit payment. The temporary agreement, reached between the Treasurer/Controller and the Mayor last July, as the two sides began arbitration, has been replace with this new order.

"Now that a ruling has been issued I will do what the City Code requires of me and implement the appropriate controls to protect taxpayers. Initiating good fiscal management was a matter of common sense and should have been done long ago. The Mayor's resistance has been disappointing."

Upstate New York Vacations

OUT OF TOWN

by Andrew Collins



Wagner Vineyards is one of the more than 100 wineries the thrive in New York's scenic Finger Lakes region. *Photo by Andrew Collins*

The recent legalization of same-sex marriage in New York has given a number of classic romantic vacation spots throughout the state's northern and western regions. Of particular note are the Adirondacks and the Finger Lakes, two areas that abound with gorgeous natural scenery and charming accommodations; the former is also a renowned winemaking region. Near the Finger Lakes, the progressive, culturally vibrant city of Rochester is a better choice if you're seeking an affordable, gay-friendly urban weekend getaway.

Here's a quick profile of these three upstate New York destinations steadily earning cache with the LGBT market.

The Adirondacks

Made up of more than 46 peaks that soar above 4,000 feet and a mix of hardscrabble villages and dapper resort towns, the Adirondacks region (visitadirondacks.com) encompasses one of the largest state parks in the country. The park's southern gateway is Lake George, a well-developed vacation center popular with families and rife with amusements, from riverboat cruises to minigolf centers.

Venture north along Rtes. 28 and 30 through North Creek, Blue Mountain Lake, Long Lake, and Tupper Lake and you'll discover some of the prettiest road-tripping, hiking and boating in the Northeast. Key attractions in these parts include the Adirondack Museum, a rambling 32-acre living-history museum that traces the region's history in fascinating detail, and the Wild Center, where clever exhibits interpret everything from local wildlife to the geology of the Adirondack's soaring peaks. Or head up Interstate 87, taking Rte. 73 west to reach storied Lake Placid, a lively hub of recreation and relaxation that's hosted the Winter Olympics on two occasions.

Many of the swankier dining options in these parts are in Lake Placid, with Brown Dog Cafe and Wine Bar, Red's Eats, Caffe Rustica and Eat 'n Meet Grill (in Saranac Lake) scoring high marks for great food and inviting settings. A New Leaf Coffeehouse is a funky stop for java, and in a wooded grove between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake, kitschy Tail-O'-Pup makes a fun stop for a lobster roll or a platter of barbecue ribs (you'll find affordable cabins onsite, too). Down in the area's southern reaches, check out casual Basil and Wicks in North Creek for well-prepared comfort favorites, or nearby BarVino for creative regional American fare.

Both members of the revered Relais & Chateaux group, the upscale Lake Placid Lodge (lakeplacidlodge.com) and ultra-exclusive, completely secluded Point Resort (thepointresort.com) are among the plushest accommodations in the Adirondacks. The historic family-operated and quite gay-friendly Mirror Lake Inn (mirrorlakeinn.com) is less pricey but still upscale, with an excellent spa and three restaurants on-site as well. In the heart of downtown Lake Placid, the Haus on Mirror Lake (thehauslp.com) has handsome rooms with full kitchens and contemporary Adirondack furniture.

Other good LGBT-welcoming bets around the area include the charming Porcupine Lodge (theporcupine.com) in Saranac Lake, and the tidy and affordable Shamrock Motel & Cottages (shamrockmotellonglake.com) on the shores of Long Lake. Farther south in the village of Chestertown, Fern Lodge (thefernlodge.com) is an intimate B&B with spacious, warmly furnished rooms and a lovely setting on a tiny lake, and the nearby Friends Lake Inn (friendslake.com) is also quite nice.

The Finger Lakes

For its acclaimed Riesling as well as increasingly well-regarded Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc and Pinot Noir, the Finger Lakes wine region (fingerlakeswinecountry.com) has developed into top winemaking area in the eastern United States. More than 100 wineries thrive in this land of 11 deep, narrow lakes.

Seneca Lake (senecalakewine.com) is at the center of the wine country, but neighboring Cayuga (cayugawinetrail.com) and Keuka (keukawinetrail.com) lakes also have plenty of prominent wineries. Some highlights include Red Newt Cellars, the purview of openly gay winemaker Brandon Seager and the home of a sensational restaurant. Just down the road, Atwater Estate turns out terrific Cabernet Franc and Riesling and has also been a venue of same-sex weddings (the lake view is impressive). Wagner Vineyards produces not only a bounty of great wines but also well-crafted microbrews. And Finger Lakes Distilling earns kudos for its aromatic gin, bourbons and distinctive aperitifs. Also consider Miles Wine Cellars, Anthony Road, Hermann J. Wiemer and Dr. Frank's Vinifera Wine Cellars, a Riesling legend on Keuka Lake.

Other highlights in these parts include the liberal college town of Ithaca (visitithaca.com), home to Ithaca College and the main campus of Cornell University, as well as such cultural gems as the Hangar Theater and Kitchen Theatre, and the Cayuga Nature Center, with its many trails and animal enclosures. Also spend some time in the small, rejuvenated city of Corning, home to excellent Corning Museum of Glass, which showcases a collection of glassworks dating back 35 centuries; the Rockwell Museum of Western Art, with an outstanding collection of Western and Native American artworks; and the several blocks of distinctive shops, galleries, and restaurants that make up the Gaffer Historic District.

For dining, favorites along the Seneca Lake shoreline include the Stonecat Cafe, which serves boldly seasoned, rustic American fare, and Suzanne, which occupies a rambling old farmhouse and serves artfully plated dinners with the same genial pace and warm service you might encounter at a dinner party. In nearby Ithaca, students get their fix of cheap and authentic ethnic food at Saigon Kitchen and Sticky Rice Thai & Laotian, and coffeehouse culture thrives at Collegetown Bagels up on the hill near Cornell's campus as well as downtown. Near here, the urbane Just A Taste Wine & Tapas serves stellar Spanish-inspired small plates, the cozy Carriage House Cafe turns out delicious breakfasts and lunches, and iconic Moosewood Restaurant draws devotees of vegetarian cooking. Noteworthy in Corning are cheap-and-cheerful Atlas Brick Over Pizzeria and elegant Three Birds Restaurant.

Gay nightlife is limited in these parts, but Ithaca bars are quite mixed gay/straight—especially Felicia's Atomic

continued on page 16

Out of Town

continued from page 14

Age and the Oasis – and not too far from the area, you'll find gay in Elmira (Chill) and Binghamton (Merlins).

An excellent base for wine-touring at the southern tip of Seneca Lake, the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel (watkinsglenharborhotel.com) contains 104 airy and modern rooms, many with water views, as well as the excellent Blue Pointe Grille. In Ithaca, you can enjoy the solicitous service of staffers from the prestigious Cornell School of Hotel Administration at the Statler Hotel (statlerhotel.cornell.edu), and a full resort experience at La Tourelle Resort and Spa (www.latourelle.com), which has a very good spa as well as the excellent Simply Red Bistro and John Thomas Steakhouse.

Quirkier, more distinctive inns proliferate in these parts, including a few romantic gay-owned options: the sumptuous, art-filled Juniper Hill B&B (www.atjuniperhill.com) in Trumansburg; the John Morris Manor (johnmorrismanor.com), overlooking the northern end of Cayuga Lake in Seneca Falls; the Black Walnut B&B (blackwalnutny.com), which dates to 1804; and the Greek Revival Hillcrest Manor (corninghillcrestmanor.com) in Corning. In downtown Ithaca, the gay-friendly, Queen Anne–style William Henry Miller Inn (www.millerinn.com) is another great option.

Rochester

More than any other city in upstate New York, the urbane educational and business hub of Rochester (visitrochester.com) has long cultivated a progressive bent. It's the hometown of women's suffragist Susan B. Anthony, whose home is now a museum, and a strong corporate environment (Kodak, Xerox, Bausch & Lomb) continues to support a robust arts scene.

Rochester's must-see attraction, the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film, contains a trove of exhibits related to the history of photography and also presents intriguing rotating shows. Other enjoyable diversions include the Memorial Art Gallery and the Rochester Museum & Science Center.

For a relatively small city, Rochester supports a highly sophisticated dining scene that complements that of the nearby Finger Lakes—wine lists feature plenty of local wines, and many chefs in these parts favor regional ingredients. Foodies shouldn't miss the Rochester Public Market, which features not only gorgeous produce but also a handful of inexpensive eateries. In the trendy Atlantic-University neighborhood, both Lento and gay-owned Edibles earn acclaim for inventive cooking and lively ambience, as do nearby spots like Mise en Place in the up-and-coming South Wedge district, and Cafe Cibon in the hip Park Avenue area. You'll also find plenty of GLBT folks sipping java at Equal Grounds in South Wedge and at Java's Cafe by downtown's Eastman Theatre.

For gay nightlife, 140 Alexander is popular with college students and younger scene-y sorts, and Tilt Nightclub revs up for dancing on weekends. Elegant and fun mixed venues in South Wedge include Lux Lounge and Solera Wine Bar. More intimate neighborhood haunts include Bachelor Forum and Avenue Pub.

The city has several gay-friendly inns, among them the Edward Harris House (www.edwardharrishouse.com), in the historic East Avenue district, and Ellwanger Estate (ellwangerestate.com), on beautiful grounds in the Mount Hope Preservation Garden neighborhood. Downtown's old-world Inn on Broadway (innonbroadway.com) is an elegant boutique property with stunning rooms. Close to Eastman House, the Strathallan Hotel (strathallan.com) is a reasonably priced and comfortable option that's undergoing a top-to-bottom renovation slated for completion in summer 2012. Also keep an eye out for East Avenue Inn & Suites (theeastavenueinn.com) – this formerly dated and dowdy property in a great neighborhood is receiving a major makeover, with new rooms debuting this spring.

Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website GayTravel.About.com and is the author of Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA.

Open Stage Offers Music Theatre Workshop

Open Stage of Harrisburg offers an intensive Music Theatre Workshop for students age 12-17 July 15 through Aug. 3. In its tenth year, the workshop is for students interested in the world of musical theatre to hone vocal, dance and acting skills. The workshop provides personalized, supportive instruction by musical theatre professionals and educators by exploring the three essential areas required to perform in musical theatre: acting, singing, and dancing. Students take part in daily dance and singing classes, as well as learn how to make bold and honest acting choices appropriate for the "larger than life" qualities of musical theatre. The training concludes with participants performing in a musical revue, "R&H&R&H", which explores the music of Richard Rodgers and his famous partnerships with Oscar Hammerstein and Lorenz Hart.

The revue will have two performances Aug. 2. Students also take a whirlwind trip to NYC to see a Broadway show and take classes from New York professionals. New this year is a Classroom 180 master class with Broadway actor Kristen Beth Williams (Nice work If You Can Get It with Matthew Broderick; Anything Goes with Sutton Foster, and Promises, Promises with Sean Hayes) will spend a day in Harrisburg teaching the class.

The Keystone Conference 2012 a Success

By Jeanine Ruhsam
President, TransCentralPA
Co-Chair, the Keystone Conference

Amanda Simpson was keynote speaker at the Gala Dinner held iin conjunction with The Keystone conference. Simpson made international news a couple of years ago when she accepted an appointment by the Obama Administration to the Department of Commerce. She was the first openly transgender woman appointee in any presidential administration.

Simpson is also a former test pilot for Raytheon who helped persuade the company to adopt a policy protecting employees from discrimination and abuse based on gender identity. She's also served on the boards of numerous organizations, including the Arizona Human Rights Fund, the Tucson Corporate LGBT Coalition, Out and Equal Workplace Advocates and the National Center for Transgender Equality. She also served as a commissioner on the City of Tucson Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Commission from 2001 until 2008 and was a candidate for Representative in the Arizona House in 2004, where she won the Democratic primary but was unsuccessful in the general election. She was elected as an Arizona Delegate for Hillary Clinton to the 2008 Democratic National Convention. In July 2011, Simpson was reposted to the United States Department of Defense where she serves today.

Shown here is the staff responsible for another successful Keystone Conference, a venue that draws hundreds of attendees from across the Eastern Seaboard.

The Who's "Tommy" at Ephrata Performing Arts Center

"The most electrifying evening of rock and roll ever to play in a theatre!" Music Theatre International said about The Who's classic hit "Tommy".

Running July 19 – Aug. 4, Peter Townshend's tale of a young boy's journey from pain to triumph, depicted in the classic '60s rock opera performed by The Who. A high-energy, one-of-a-kind theatrical event, the exhilarating score is timeless in its youthful appeal, giving the show a cross-generational appeal that has made it a smash hit.

After witnessing the accidental murder of his mother's lover by his father, Tommy is traumatized into catatonia. Seeking refuge in the excitement and challenge of the arcade, he is discovered to have an uncanny knack for playing pinball, becoming an adolescent "Pinball Wizard."

Opening Night After Party to be held Thursday, July 19 at Lily's On Main. The After Party is included with your opening night ticket. Please remember to bring it with you to enjoy light refreshments, cash bar and a light faire menu.

Tickets: http://www.ephrataperformingartscenter.com; (717) 733-7966. Box Office Hours - Show weeks: Tues., Thurs., Fri. noon–6 p.m.; Wed noon-3 p.m. (extended hours on show nights); Non-Show Weeks: Tues. noon-6 p.m.; Thurs., Fri. noon-3 p.m.

Special preview performance at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 18, benefits the Parker Harley Fund in support of an Ephrata teen battling a rare liver disease. All tickets $30, including picnic theme reception at 6:30 p.m.

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Highspire Man Fights Homophobia Among Seniors

Though national attitudes of acceptance of homosexuals may be softening – President Obama recently acknowledged a personal belief that same-sex couples should be permitted to marry – incidents such as that experienced by Dockey in State College remain too common.

WELCOMING CONGREGATION

Photos / Noelle Barrett

Rev. Howard Dana of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, is openly gay. He says his congregation is "welcoming" of those in the LGBT community and estimates that 10 percent of his congregants are gay.

By Noelle Barrett

Douglas Dockey was walking toward a gay bar in State College when he heard the taunt.

"Hey, where are you going faggot."

The speaker, a man Dockey did not know, then took a swing at the 61-year-old Dockey.

The Highspire resident, who is gay, is one of many LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) individuals over 55 who say they have faced prejudice, hostility, even violence in their lifetimes.

Though national attitudes of acceptance of homosexuals may be softening – President Obama recently acknowledged a personal belief that same-sex couples should be permitted to marry – incidents such as that experienced by Dockey in State College remain too common.

"We see people [in the US] being killed by gay bashers," he said. "In other countries, you can be put to death [for being gay]."

It is harder for the older LGBT population to find acceptance among their peers.

"These folks lived in a time when [homosexuality] was considered a mental illness," said Louie Marven, of the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania. As a result, he said, some LGBT seniors go back into the closet.

The phenomenon prompted the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community Center Coalition in Harrisburg to start a new program last year that focuses on gay seniors – the Central PA LGBT Aging Network, or CPLAN. The program promotes a healthy quality of life, through education, programming and outreach, and social activities.

Last fall, CPLAN hosted a showing of "Gen Silent," a documentary that exposed discrimination against older homosexual in care facilities. The film highlights the harsh realities of discrimination by staff and shows the suffering endured by those in the LGBT community.

"In the research that I've done, a lot of the time when it comes time to disclose orientation to their provider, there is a fear of disclosing," said Donald Anklam, CPLAN intern.

His biggest concern is nursing homes and retirement facilities. There are no federal laws that ban discrimination based on sexual orientation in public housing. On the state level, the Fair Housing Act does not ban gender identity or sexual orientation housing discrimination. This means that LGBT couples who are both in a care facility may be prevented from sharing a room. Discriminatory treatment of residents by staff can also discourage visitors, he said.

"Ten years from now, due to health and financial situations, I could be in a nursing home," said Dockey. "That's the question I'll have to face. Will I be accepted?"

At a recent conference in Hershey called Out and Equal, CPLAN talked about the lack of equality for LGBT people in the workplace.

When Cara Akright and her partner Teddy Maurer lost their son, the tragedy was worsened when Mauer was refused bereavement leave where she worked.

"Legally he was only my son because Pa. law states you can only have one woman and one man adopt," said Akright. "My partner didn't get leave time from work because they didn't recognize (the son) as her family member."

Pennsylvania does not recognize same-sex marriages, civil unions, or domestic partnerships.

"We went to a lawyer and made sure we had power of attorney for each other," said Akright. "If something were to happen to me, there's the concern that my family might fight Teddy, or try to. It was even more important to have that safeguard."

Anklam and his partner always carry powers of attorney papers when they travel, but he said some seniors may not realize the importance of them.

The Central Pa LGBT Aging Network, or CPLAN, sponsors events such as this oldies dance in Harrisburg, to bring older members of the LGBT community together. There is a tendency among gay seniors to remain isolated, the group says.

"Our goal (at CPLAN) is to educate people so they can educate themselves," he said.

Even in safe zones and places where there are allies, bias and discrimination still lurks.

"There is the assumption that everyone is straight," said Marven.

A visit to the doctor's office can sometimes result in subtle discrimination. Medical forms don't commonly include a transgender box, and posters do not include LGBT people. The forms at OBGYN doctors often assume a person is straight.

"My OBGYN is very, very supportive and open," said Akright.

Still, every year she is asked to fill out forms that ask what kind of birth control she is using. "I've been open with doctors, but sometimes the doctor is clueless."

CPLAN is working to identify gay-friendly healthcare specialists – especially for women – nursing homes, senior centers, doctors, and attorneys.

"We're really trying to be that hub of resources," said Marven. "The more you get into it, the more needs you see. We are trying to be methodical about it."

There are also supportive churches surfacing in the area.

"[The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg] is what's known as a welcoming congregation," said Rev. Dana Howard, the church's openly gay pastor. "I would say 10 percent of our congregation is [LGBT]."

The church takes a progressive stand on religion, she said. "If God is love, our job is to spread it."

But many churches take a different view. Acceptance of homosexuality is a difficult issue for faith communities. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim texts are widely interpreted as denouncing same-sex relationships as a sin. The belief puts many people of faith in conflict with the rapid cultural shift toward accepting alternative lifestyles. These differences are getting a high profile in the 2012 presidential race.

"There are a lot of religious people who have been hateful," said Akright. "If you go to PRIDE, they line up chanting and waving flags. We are talking about churches in our area."

LGBT Seniors have been dealing with violence and hatred for decades. For Dockey the ridicule and violence started in junior high school.

"What I went through has been perpetual," he said. "It gets easier, but it doesn't go away."

Like the time he was waiting to use an ATM machine behind a man talking on a cell phone.

"I asked him if he was soon done, and he started calling me a faggot to the person on the phone."

"Ignore, ignorance," said Dockey. "You're not going to change [homophobic people]. You can't interfere with their First Amendment rights."

Public discrimination hurts, but the pain is greater when it comes from a family member. Akright said she and Maurer do not always find acceptance within their families.

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Highspire

continued from page 19

"I think some people (in my family) were disappointed and concerned about what other people would think when I came out," she said. "There is sometimes an uncomfortable feeling when my parents introduce us as 'Cara and her friend.' I sometimes feel uncomfortable, especially if it's someone who is religious."

National polls show growing acceptance of homosexuality – nearly half of Americans now support same-sex marriages. But those statistics are sharply delineated by age. Acceptance among those 55 and older is well below 50 percent. The result is that LGBT seniors feel isolated.

"There are many people over 50 that are living unsocial and solitary," Dockey said. "They don't have the network of friends and family that straight people do."

CPLAN offers monthly social events to bring the LGBT community together and foster a comfortable and healthy social life. While some have no one to talk to, others may feel uncomfortable at gay bars and clubs. One of the more popular events was a Golden Oldies Dance.

"We had music from the '50s to '70s and TV shows playing from those eras," said Anklam. "There was dancing and food to go along. It was a good turnout and everyone liked the event."

CPLAN members also do advocacy work in the Capitol Building.

"CPLAN drops materials in the offices of legislators," Dockey said. "We talk about legislation initiatives, send support letters, and make phone calls."

Often, their words fall on deaf ears, but Dockey sees progress. President Obama's decision to repeal the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy is a step in the right direction, he said. And he hopes the momentum will continue with a Supreme Court ruling in the next five years to allow same-sex couples to marry.

"We would like to see gay marriage legalized in Pennsylvania and some [anti]-discrimination laws as well," said Akright. "There is a need to be in a place where you can be who you are. Even if policies and law changes, it doesn't change attitudes."

But no matter how people respond, Dockey said he will never quit advocating.

"If you don't ask, they will never say yes," he said.

legal column

By Leo L. Dunn, Attorney at Law

Legal Updates on Marriage and Estate Planning

Pennsylvania's GLBT community had good news and bad news from the courts on the last day of May.

On the bad news side, the Commonwealth Court held that the surviving partner of the lesbian couple who celebrated a New Jersey Civil Union could not claim the 0% tax rate of a surviving spouse under Pennsylvania's Revenue Code. In Warnock v. Commonwealth, the court held that the survivor must pay the 15% tax rate of an unrelated beneficiary. Not good news, but expected and why I always advise the couples need to plan for this by having wills as well as life insurance policies in place.

On the good news side, the First Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston held Section 3 of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) to be unconstitutional because it discriminates against same-sex couples by failing to give them the same rights and privileges that heterosexual couples receive and it interferes with a state's right to define marriage. Massachusets v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Section 3 of DOMA, 1 U.S.C. § 7, defines "marriage" for purposes of federal law:

> In determining the meaning of any Act of Congress, or of any ruling, regulation, or interpretation of the various administrative bureaus and agencies of the United States, the word "marriage" means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word "spouse" refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife.

The effect of Section 3 is to deny same sex couples the ability to access spousal social security income, veterans' benefits, tax savings and a myriad of other federal benefits that opposite sex spouses can access.

If the case is not appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, or if the case is denied a hearing before the Supreme Court, it's outcome becomes law within the First Circuit's jurisdiction in New England.

Of course this ruling does not directly impact Pennsylvania couples, but it does provide support for the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia to rule in like manner on a case pending before them that also attempts to have DOMA Section 3 declared unconstitutional. Likewise to the above case, such a ruling would only apply to the Third Circuit's jurisdiction if an appeal to the Supreme Court is not accepted.

Another outcome in both these cases is that the Supreme Court accepts and rules on the case. In that event, we will need to wait and see what happens. The result could propel same sex marriage to full legal status or set back efforts for another generation.

Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in Harrisburg area with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com or 717-503-1207.

thinking out loud

By Abby Dees

> **The campaign against Prop 8 generated millions of dollars and we had people like George Clooney and Brad Pitt on our side.**

Our Civil Rights Paradox:
Why we have to have political power to prove that we don't have political power

I've often thought I should write a column called, "Weird Things Lawyers Do," to explain to normal people why attorneys, like me, spend so much time arguing about meaningless points. If you read any of the Prop 8 federal trial transcripts you may have noticed that a lot of that trial was spent arguing about whether LGBT people had political power. It was a classic case of lawyers bringing everything to a standstill to fight like feral cats about something totally off topic.

But that question does, in fact, matter a lot.

The reason why the issue of LGBT political power is so important in any LGBT discrimination case is this: Discrimination lawsuits are usually the remedy of last resort, so the courts want to make sure that there's a very good reason for them to step in. One of the ways they look at this is by asking how much political power the targeted group has to fight for its rights on its own.

When you have a majority of people voting for something like Prop 8 based on their firmly held (if completely delusional) beliefs, the court doesn't want to up-end the voter's will without first finding out if that's really the only way for the targeted group to adequately defend itself. Think back to high school civics and all that stuff about checks and balances. The court is supposed to check the overreach of legislators or even voters, but they can't go overboard and thereby undermine the democratic process. Therefore, to challenge the tyranny of the majority in court, we have to prove we're politically powerless first.

We're in an odd situation now. We've made so much progress that we have HRC schmoozing with the president, gay marriage in maybe 8 states by next year, a gay cable channel and "girlfriend" jeans for men. Can we really say that we have no political power? Isn't that the point of all this awareness work, to increase our clout as a community?

The campaign against Prop 8 generated millions of dollars and we had people like George Clooney and Brad Pitt on our side. On either side, it was perhaps the largest ballot initiative campaign in any state ever. So it makes me cringe a little that we have to act all victim-y in court to fight for our civil rights. And yet we do.

I struggled watching this play out, knowing as an attorney that there were good reasons to claim this powerlessness, but still feeling like some important fact was missing. It didn't make sense to me that as we got closer to equality as a community, the courts would be less inclined to support our equality.

I finally figured it out this month at a conference of LGBT law and policy wonks who came together just to look at this issue. First of all, if you haven't already noticed, the other side really likes to turn the oppression narrative around on us. As I discussed in my last column, they are spending big money to disseminate the idea that we are bullying them into silence. Poor homophobes are suffering no less than full PTSD from retaliation by very mean and powerful gay people. A panelist at the conference I attended read examples of this harassment from witness declarations: Gay people gave Prop 8 supporters dirty looks at the local country club, sons wrote disapproving letters to parents expressing sadness at their support for the measure. Hair-curling stuff.

I'd like to call bulls*&t on this silly rhetoric and remind people, again, what kind of damage homophobia still does to our community, especially or young members, despite any political gains we've made.

Second, as law professor Kenji Yashino explained, this whole "political power" thing is a catch-22. Courts won't give you the time of day if you're truly politically powerless. Of the top of my head, I would guess that homeless people haven't exactly hit pay dirt in court, for example. In other words, to win, you have to have enough political power to hire the people and the consultants to demonstrate that you don't have enough political power to do that. Yep, lawyers are weird.

York events

Victorian Tea
July 15, 4-6 p.m.
Haldeman Mansion
230 Locust Grove Road, Bainbridge, PA
Admission Cost is $25 per person
Tina Mark 717-426-2166
www.haldeman-mansion.org
Elegant affair, full course meal, music and tour of mansion.

Box Lunch Revue
Thru Aug. 30 - FREE
11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Cherry Lane, Downtown York
Live entertainment every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the summer.
www.yorkcity.org/boxlunchrevue

Create Change

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"I asked for a response, but I never got one. I thought, you know, I need to somehow get them to talk and get some dialogue going."

What the couple did next caused more than just dialogue; they created change.

Clouser and Weaver contacted WGAL who interviewed the couple the next day.

"Our parents always air on the side of caution. They asked if we really wanted to do this," said Clouser. "Our response was things aren't going to change or things won't happen unless someone initiates the dialogue and the change to happen. This was an opportunity for us to make everyone aware."

From there, other news outlets picked up the story, and people across the country learned what happened.

On Monday, June 4, Harold E. Miller, president and chief executive officer of Lancaster Newspapers Inc., issued a written statement saying the announcement was rejected because it was not "consistent with prevailing community standards."

When asked what the newspaper's opinion of the prevailing community standards was, Miller said in an interview with his newspaper, the Intelligencer Journal, it was "what we believe to be the most typical behavior in the entire Lancaster County community."

That same day, a petition was started on change.org, where the petition organizer, Scott Shumaker wrote the newspaper's belief was "narrow-minded and contrary to the nationwide trend of increasing acceptance of same-sex relationships and marriage."

The petition received 335 signatures.

"People were really proactive about how they felt and how that decision made them feel," said Louie Marven, Executive Director of LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA.

Many spread the word through social networking, while others contacted the newspaper directly by phone and email. Some even threatened to or canceled their subscriptions.

"The community can really exercise some authority of power," said Ted Martin, Executive Director of Equality Pennsylvania. "I think the community came together and did that in the two best ways--through the pocket book and through bad publicity."

Rev. Susan A. Minasian, College Chaplain at Franklin and Marshall stood in protest at the office on Monday. A Franklin and Marshall graduate joined her.

"People who stopped by and asked about it were all supportive and thought it was ridiculous," said Minasian. "We had a good response even though we were a small crowd."

Miller introduced himself to Minasian and asked why she was there, she said.

"I told him I believe that the freedom of the press in the United States is to protect the minority opinion, and while I don't think it was a minority point of view, the newspaper took a stand," said Minasian. "I said you're not here to represent one voice."

She said while they disagreed, Miller listened to her.

"I stayed there until 2:30 p.m. and decided I would stand there some period of time each day until they would print [the announcement]," said Minasian. "I get there are people who don't necessarily like marriage equality, but their opinion should not trump a newspaper that represents all of the people in the county," said Minasian.

Later that day, Miller contacted Weaver and Clouser and informed the couple he was reversing his position, said Clouser.

Miller told readers in a story posted to Lancaster Online, "Engagement, marriage and anniversary announcements are meaningful expressions of love and caring and deserve to be published…We are publishing these announcements without passing judgment, in an effort to fully serve our community and all of our readers."

Clouser said initially the couple wasn't sure of Miller's intentions.

"We weren't sure of the sincerity or if he was coming out of it from a business sense," he said. "Then [Miller] called back a second time and said, 'I was remiss in also letting you know I'm sorry for this and I do want to apologize.' I think he truly wanted to do the right and smart thing."

Clouser and Weaver said they appreciate the community support.

"I am very thankful to all of the people who were supportive," said Weaver. "I thank the people that wrote letters and emails and made phone calls. I applaud their convictions, and I'm glad people were having thoughtful discussions."

A protest scheduled for the following morning turned into a celebration of change.

"I said now we need to go back and say thank you. When you protest against people or a corporation because you think what they do is wrong, then part of activism is having the gratitude for the change," said Minasian. "The affirmation of doing the right thing is just as important as holding them accountable."

Members of the LGBT community and allies showed up with cards, thank you signs and flowers.

"I thought it was important for him to see that we care and are appreciative," Minasian said.

Some people see Clouser and Weaver as heroes, but Clouser said they just wanted to raise awareness.

"Initially, when I contacted WGAL, I didn't think it would be an example of change or history happening," he said. "I wasn't doing it to be a hero like everyone calls us. It's very flattering, but I would think anyone in our position would do this."

"In a sense, it was a quick victory," said Marven. "It's helpful for the whole movement."

But there are many more victories to come for the LGBT community. That requires people to continue to create change.

Martin said it's crucial for members of the LGBT community to know their rights and to keep the movement going. Currently same-sex marriage is not legal in Pennsylvania, and those marriages from other states aren't recognized here.

Clouser and Weaver will marry at the end of June in Connecticut.

"I'm publicly frank and what I tell people to do is get married in another state and have the celebration there," said Martin. "Keep all of the receipts and record of all the money they spend. Copy them and send them to state legislators, and tell them that's not what they are spending here."

Change is beginning to happen where it isn't necessarily expected-- in churches.

In July, trial liturgy of a same-sex blessing might be approved at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Indianapolis. On June 10, after the 142nd Annual Diocesan Convention, the Right Rev. Nathan D. Baxter, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central PA said his diocese would use the liturgy if it's approved.

While the liturgy isn't a marriage, it's a step in the right direction.

Other churches, known as welcoming or open and affirming churches, they affirm the full inclusion of members of the LGBT community.

Clouser and Weaver plan to have a service at Grace UCC in Lancaster, their open and affirming church next June for their friends and family.

"Our church is doing exactly what Jesus wanted, and that is to include everyone," said Clouser.

Allies need to come out of the closet to instill their own change, said Minasian.

"Parents and friends have to stop hiding the fact that we are supportive," she said. "I think heterosexuals have the responsibility of working for the rights with the LGBT community."

Martin said creating change also means asking the hard questions to legislators and voting for those who support equality.

"We can change the situation by changing the players," he said.

"There are always things where we have to go above and beyond what every normal heterosexual couple has to go," said Clouser. "This one little step just even to get an engagement announcement shouldn't have been a surprise, but it just shows how we have to go above and beyond."

But the small step Clouser and Weaver took is one extra step other couples won't have to endure.

Minasian said if you do something every day, then justice happens.

"It shows when people work together and engage in a dialogue, things can happen and change can happen," said Clouser.

PAPERS THAT ALLOW SAME-SEX COUPLES TO PRINT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Dauphin County**
- **The Sentinel, Carlisle, Cumberland County**
- **Lancaster Newspapers Inc., Lancaster County**
- **York Daily Record/Sunday News, York County**
- **Evening Sun, Hanover, York County**

PRIDE

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the community. The law of physics that says objects in motion tend to stay in motion is also the LGBT community's current political law – momentum is upon us.

As always, this year's event offers quality programs for every aspect of the community. All details in Pride Guide inside.

July 27 - If you like choral music, there's the popular Voices United Concert July 27. That same night there's a pre-Pride Party at Liquid 891.

July 28 - Parade - The parade kicks off at 11 a.m. The Pride Festival of Central PA and the Unity Parade would like to announce this year's Grand Marshall, Tija R. Hilton-Phillips, Esq. Tija is the Director of Regulatory Affairs for Highmark and a member of Highmark's Diversity Council. She also serves as the Diversity Council Liaison to Highmark's LGBTA Business Resource Group and is a proud ally. Tija is a personal and professional success story and an inspiration to many. She is an only child who was raised by her single mother and maternal grandmother. Tija is an attorney and has been married to to her college sweetheart,Tod, for 23 years and is the proud mother of a son and daughter. She is also a tireless activist and champion of issues, especially diversity related issues, that are making a real difference in her company and community. She has been employed at Highmark in Camp Hill since 1992. The 2012 Unity Parade Convertible Sponsor is Faulkner Fiat of Harrisburg.

DJ Ryan Foxx - resident DJ at Altlands Ranch, York, is Parade MC and MC of North Stage. This is Foxx's fifth year as North Stage Festival MC.

Festival - South Stage/Main Stage
The South Stage/Main Stage MC is Jade Esteban Estrada. The headline act is the local and popular musical group 312.

Estrada is a successful Latin pop singer, comedian, choreographer, actor, political commentator, and human rights activist. Out Magazine called him "the first gay Latin star." In 2011, he began interviewing high-profile politicians and religious leaders in his weekly column "Glitter Political" for the online newsmagazine Plaza de Armas.

Estrada also has a show called "A Lullaby for Ryan: The History of HIV/AIDS in America," a comedy-based but also serious look at the still-infecting-gay-men disease. He will perform this show on Thurs., July 26. At press time, details were still in the making. See Pride web site - http://www.centralpapridefestival.com/ - for details.

After Party - Although there is no "official" After Party, Pride planners ask attendees to patronize the region's lgbt bars, restaurants, and other entertainment venues.

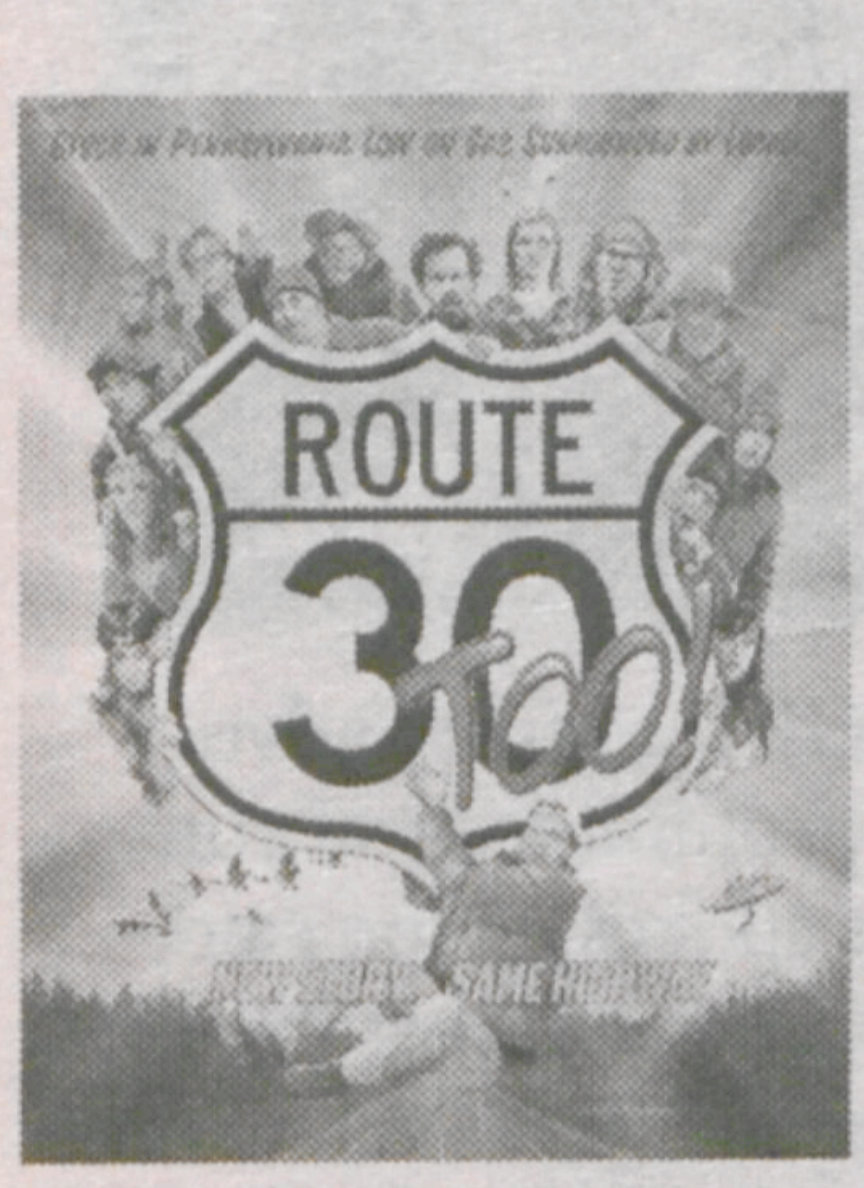
July 29 - If you're an activist, there's a forum July 29 by Capital Region Stonewall Democrats. They offer a panel called "Aging with Pride" at 2-3:30 p.m, Midtown Scholar Bookstore, 1302 North Third Street, Harrisburg Pa. 17102.

If you're religious, there's The Spirits United Interfaith Service Sun., July 29, 7 p.m. at Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit, 2973 Jefferson St., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110.

Take your place. Lend your shoulder to the LGBT community's tipping point. Push anti-gay sentiment over the edge. Create change!

Route 30 Too! Premieres in Chambersburg & Gettysburg

Junior (Ray Ficca) works for Rotten Egg at his Gentlemen's club.



John Putch's locally shot follow-up film to Route 30, entitled Route 30 Too! Has its world premiere Sept. 8-9 at Chambersburg's Historic Capitol Theater, 159 S. Main St. Chambersburg, PA 17201 (www.thecapitoltheatre.org).

Putch is the son of actress Jean Stapleton and the late producer/director William H. Putch. The first film played successfully at more than 40 film festivals and won 16 awards. ROUTE 30, TOO! is scheduled for a theatrical release September 2012.

The world premiere is followed by an Oct 6 premiere in Gettysburg at the Majestic Theatre. (www.gettysburgmajestic.org)

The film was shot in December of 2010 and has been in post production ever since.

"The second film in the trilogy has a lot more going on this time around", said director/producer Putch. "Lots of visual effects make for a much more complicated post schedule."

The new film centers around the mystical Pond Bank road, where Ghost and Alien activity has been rumored. "The White Woman was so popular in the first film, that I decided to bring her back in part 2. She is a pivotal character that helps expose strange Alien activity around Mister Ed's Elephant Museum and Candy Outlet."

Jocelyn Carbaugh (Christine Elise McCarthy) is the most successful realtor in the area.

Aside from Mister Ed's, new area filming locations included The Historic Round Barn, The Penn National Inn, The Cottage Pub, Old Jail House and the town square in Chambersburg. Fayetteville and Caledonia State Park are well represented also.

Returning cast members include Lee Wilkof (Rotten Egg), Mister Ed (Himself), Curtis Armstrong (Deerhunter Bob), Dan Poole (Stickle), David Cowgill (Tork), Wil Love (Jackie Flat), Robert Romanus (Ghosthunter Dick), Christine Elise McCarthy (Realtor Jocelyn), St. Thomas native, Alicia Fusting (Candy) and Darrell Vaught (Squick).

New cast members include Beth Behrs (Aliengirl) fresh off her new CBS sitcom '2 Broke Girls', Pittsburgh's own Brigid Ryan (Mean Mary), Jamie Rose (Ghosthunter Dot), Noah Applebaum (Chicky), Totem Pole Playhouse Artistic Director Ray Ficca (Junior), Rodney Lee Conover (Bartender Rodney), Katie Rayle (Cousin Trudy), and Chambersburg natives Molly Lahr (Margie) and Andrew Stephen Johnson (Customer Frank).

Rotten Egg (Lee Wilkof) discovers a UFO in the woods along Pond Bank road.

Director/producer John Putch.

The premiere screenings will be shown at the Capitol Theater in Chambersburg Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m., Sept. 9, 3 p.m. Tickets - Capitol Box office or website. The Gettysburg Majestic is Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. Tickets -Majestic Box office or website.

Ray Ficca plays Junior, who's in search of love or maybe a quick boink, when he meets a local realtor who shows him her "private" property. Ficca says about his character "He's a very sweet character and a heck of a nice guy. He tries, sometimes too hard, to do the right thing. He really likes pleasing folks. He's the underdog and I like rooting for underdogs."

As Totem Pole Playhouse artistic director, Ficca finds folks in Fayetteville, Gettysburg, Chambersburg "very generous and down to earth people". He considers the south central region his home away from home. He's been acting professionally since his 1989 graduation from Georgetown University followed by a Diploma from the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts in Washington, DC. He has over 100 professional stage credits from theatres in New York, Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Ohio.

Lee Wilkof plays Rotten Egg, and is a returning character. Like people we all know, Rotten Egg is a cantankerous fellow expressing whatever's on his mind without filters. "The opportunity to explore this kind of person was a challenge for me and lots of fun," Wilkof said.

Wilkof's connection to the region stems from his dad being a Civil War buff. His brother is named Robert E. He's Lee. "So being in the Gettysburg area is just thrilling for me. The local folks are all kind and supportive of the project and we are minor celebrities while shooting, which is always fun. I got no complaints."

Wilkof originated the role of Seymour in the original production of Little Shop of Horrors and has worked in several Broadway shows. He was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance in Kiss Me Kate. He's currently doing a Chicago production of The Iceman Cometh with Nathan Lane and Brian Dennehy. He's hoping to direct a film next year entitled Lounge Act.

Trailer @ http://www.route30too.com/Route-30Too/TRAILER.html

Pittsburgh Pirates Release "It Get's Better" Video

The Pittsburgh Pirates May 4 unveiled their contribution to the It Gets Better Project during pregame. The video features Pirates Manager Clint Hurdle and pitchers Joel Hanrahan and Jeff Karstens discussing the impact of bullying on youth and urging their young fans to seek help if they are experiencing bullying.

The video has been released to YouTube and appears on the It Gets Better Project's website at HYPERLINK "http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=YF3G85%2F6pHL8VMbTLzAvET%2Ff95v10qsj" \o "http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=YF3G85/6pHL8VMbTLzAvET/f95v10qsj" \t "_blank" www.itgetsbetter.org.

The Pirates are the ninth major league baseball team to submit such a video and support the pledge to speak up against hate and intolerance, and provide hope for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other bullied teens.

Other MLB teams joining project include the San Francisco Giants, Boston Red Sox, Chicago Cubs, Baltimore Orioles, Philadelphia Phillies, Seattle Mariners, Los Angeles Dodgers and Tampa Bay Rays.

Blogger Sue Kerr at Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents is credited for her leadership in having the project completed. PLC and Equality PA worked with the team to develop the concept and connect them with the national partners, including the Trevor Project and GLSEN.

"Working with the Pirates on this project and witnessing their increasing investment in our local LGBT youth has been a privilege," explained Sue Kerr, Pittsburgh native and local lesbian blogger. "I grew up when Pittsburgh earned 'The City of Champions' title and this proves that we still hold it. I've never been more proud to be from Pittsburgh."

Equality PA has been involved with other efforts to get professional Pennsylvania sports teams to make these important videos including the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Philadelphia Phillies and Eagles.

"These important videos aren't just a trend," noted Equality PA Executive Director Ted Martin, "they are a recognition that positive words are even more powerful than those meant to demean."

Moving forward, the Pirates will be working with the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Pittsburgh (GLCC) and the local chapter of the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) to build relationships with LGBT youth on an ongoing basis. The video launch included a private meet and greet between members of the Pirates team and youth involved with the GLCC. The Lambda Foundation of Pittsburgh also teamed up with the Pirates' Community Relations to make the game accessible for the youth's families and siblings.

More than 50,000 videos have been made for the It Gets Better Project, including contributions from Western PA State Representative Dan Frankel and City of Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl. The Renaissance City Choices and members of Dreams of Hope performing arts group have also contributed videos.

arts & entertainment

OPEN STAGE OF HARRISBURG

Tickets: 717-232-Open (6736)

EPHRATA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Sharadin Bigler Theatre
The Night of the Iguana
Tennessee Williams' classic drama
Sept. 6 - 22

In a seedy hotel on the Mexican coast, a defrocked minister-turned-tour guide teeters on the brink of a nervous breakdown as his justly agitated tour party threatens to revolt. The last shreds of his morality are tested by the hotel's lusty proprietress, a teenage temptress and a virginal spinster. As the veils fall, Williams' characters grow richer, darker and more compellingly universal, echoing themes running through his epic masterpieces, "A Streetcar Named Desire" and "The Glass Menagerie."
Info: 717-733-7966;
sharadinbiglertheater.com

HERSHEY THEATRE

Vicki Lawrence
Aug. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Emmy-Award winning comedienne Vicki Lawrence is one of the most beloved television personalities of her generation. She'll bring her laughs and "Vicki Lawrence and Mama: A Two-Woman Show" to Hershey.
Tickets: : $35, $45 and $65 (includes meet and greet)
717-534-3405, 1-800-745-3000,
HersheyTheatre.com.

WHITAKER CENTER

Sunoco Performance Theater
Dark Star Orchestra
Sat., July 14, 8 p.m.

Dark Star Orchestras shows are built off the extensive catalog of the Grateful Dead. On any given night the band will perform a show based on a set list from the Grateful Dead's 30 years of extensive touring or use the catalog of original songs and often played covers to create a unique set list for the show. This allows music fans both young and old to share in the experience.
Tickets: Tickets: $27.50, $34.50; 717-214-ARTS (2787)

Little Feat, special guest Amy Lennard
Fri., Aug. 17, 7:30 p.m.
Sunoco Performance Theater

Legendary rock band Little Feat -- formed by singer-songwriter, lead vocalist and guitarist Lowell George and keyboardist Bill Payne -- returns to Whitaker Center. Although the band has undergone several changes in its lineup, the music remains an eclectic blend of rock, blues, country, folk, gospel, soul funk and jazz. Acclaimed artists who have performed and recorded the music of Little Feat include: Phish, Garth Brooks, Bob Dylan, Robert Palmer, Van Halen, Jimmy Buffett, among many others.
Tickets: $34.50, $39.50; 717-214-ARTS (2787)

STRAND CAPITOL

Capitol Theatre
CapLive: Blitzen Trapper
Thurs., July 26, 8 p.m.

Blitzen Trapper, special guest Sarah Jaffe Singer-songwriter and guitarist Eric Earley, along with band mates, Erik Menteer (guitar, keyboard), Brian Adrian Koch (drums, vocals), Michael Van Pelt (bass), Drew Laughery (keyboard) and Marty Marquis (keyboard, vocals) will rock the Capitol Theatre for a must-see night of music!
Tickets: 717-846-1111

JuDee Brown is Coming Home
Strand Theatre
Sat, Aug., 9 p.m.

JuDee Brown's
Home Coming
COMEDY SHOW

Hometown Honey JuDee Brown and friends will rock the stage with JuDee Brown's Home Coming Comedy Show! Doors open 8:30 p.m. Refunds available except for the day of performance.
Tickets: $15, $20, 717-846-1111

The Wiggles Return to Hershey

The original Fab Four from Down Under are back! The Wiggles summer tour will reunite Anthony, Jeff and Murray with Yellow Wiggle Greg Page as they perform together again for the first time in five years. Come "Follow the Leader" and dance the "Hot Potato" with The Wiggles, Captain Feathersword, Dorothy the Dinosaur, Henry the Octopus, Wags the Dog and all the Wiggly Dancers when they are Getting Strong in Hershey.

The Wiggling commences at Hershey Theatre on Saturday, August 11 for two shows at 12:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Tickets: $18.25, $27.25, $45.25 and $78.25 for VIP. VIP includes best seats in the house, an exclusive gift along with an activity sheet and a chance to dance along with the Wiggles. There is a six-ticket limit for VIP. Processing fees apply to all prices and there is an eight-ticket limit. Tickets are available at Hershey Theatre Box Office, they can be charged by phone at 717-534-3405 or online at www.HersheyTheatre.com or www.TicketMaster.com.

The Wiggles

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transgender column

By Jeanine Ruhsam
president, TransCentralPA
Board Member, LGBT Center
of Central PA

On The Path to Transgender Equality

In mid April President Obama was excoriated by numerous LGBT equality advocates for his refusal to issue an expected executive order that would prohibit federal contractors from discriminating against LGBT workers. In response his spokesperson said, "The president is dedicated to securing equal rights for LGBT Americans and that is why he has long supported an inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would prohibit employers across the country from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity." He continued by saying "The president is committed to lasting and comprehensive change and therefore our goal is passage of ENDA, which is a legislative solution to LGBT employment discrimination – just as the president pressed for legislative repeal of ['Don't Ask, Don't Tell']."

However, less than two weeks later the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the Federal Government accomplished the same hoped for goal by ruling that job bias against transgender employees on the basis of gender identity amounts to sex discrimination under existing law. The EEOC is the federal agency that interprets and enforces federal non-discrimination laws. This decision on transgender workers applies to both public and private employers throughout the United States, including the 34 states where non-discrimination laws based on gender identity don't exist.

On May 20 the Department of Justice accepted this decision which stated, "[W]e conclude that intentional discrimination against a transgender individual because the person is transgender is, by definition, discrimination 'based on … sex,' and such discrimination therefore violates Title VII."

Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center (which filed the complaint that helped bring about this decision) said, "This is a historic day for human rights in the United States. From the Deep South to my home state of Missouri, starting today transgender and gender non-conforming people now have legal recourse if they face discrimination on the job. We no longer have to be silent when we are fired or not hired simply for being who we are." Davis went on to state, ""The decision today ensures that every transgender person in the United States will have legal recourse to employment discrimination and with it a way to safeguard their access to vital employment benefits such as health insurance and retirement savings plans."

Transgender Law Center's Legal Director Ilona Turner further explained, "It's incredibly significant that the Commission has finally put its stamp of approval on the common-sense understanding that discrimination against transgender people is a form of sex discrimination. That's true whether it's understood as discrimination because of the person's gender identity, or because they have changed their sex, or because they don't conform to other people's stereotypes of how men and women ought to be."

"As many as 90 percent of trans people still face tremendous discrimination in employment according to our [National Center for Transgender Equality] National Discrimination Survey", said Mara Keisling, Executive Director of NCTE and a Harrisburg, PA native, "and it will help so much that the EEOC agrees with what more and more courts have been saying — discriminating against trans people because of their sex, or their perceived sex, or what an employer thinks about their sex is clearly sex discrimination, illegal and wrong."

As exciting as this decision is in the progression towards full equality for transgender people, it is still not the law. Full legal equality for transgender people will only come with the passage and implementation of ENDA, which will prohibit discrimination in hiring and employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Thus, the burden still falls on the transgender person who finds his or her self the subject or discrimination to fight to reverse such treatment. Masen Davis advises, "If you think you are being targeted with harassment or discrimination at work, I urge you to contact your local EEOC office and file a complaint."

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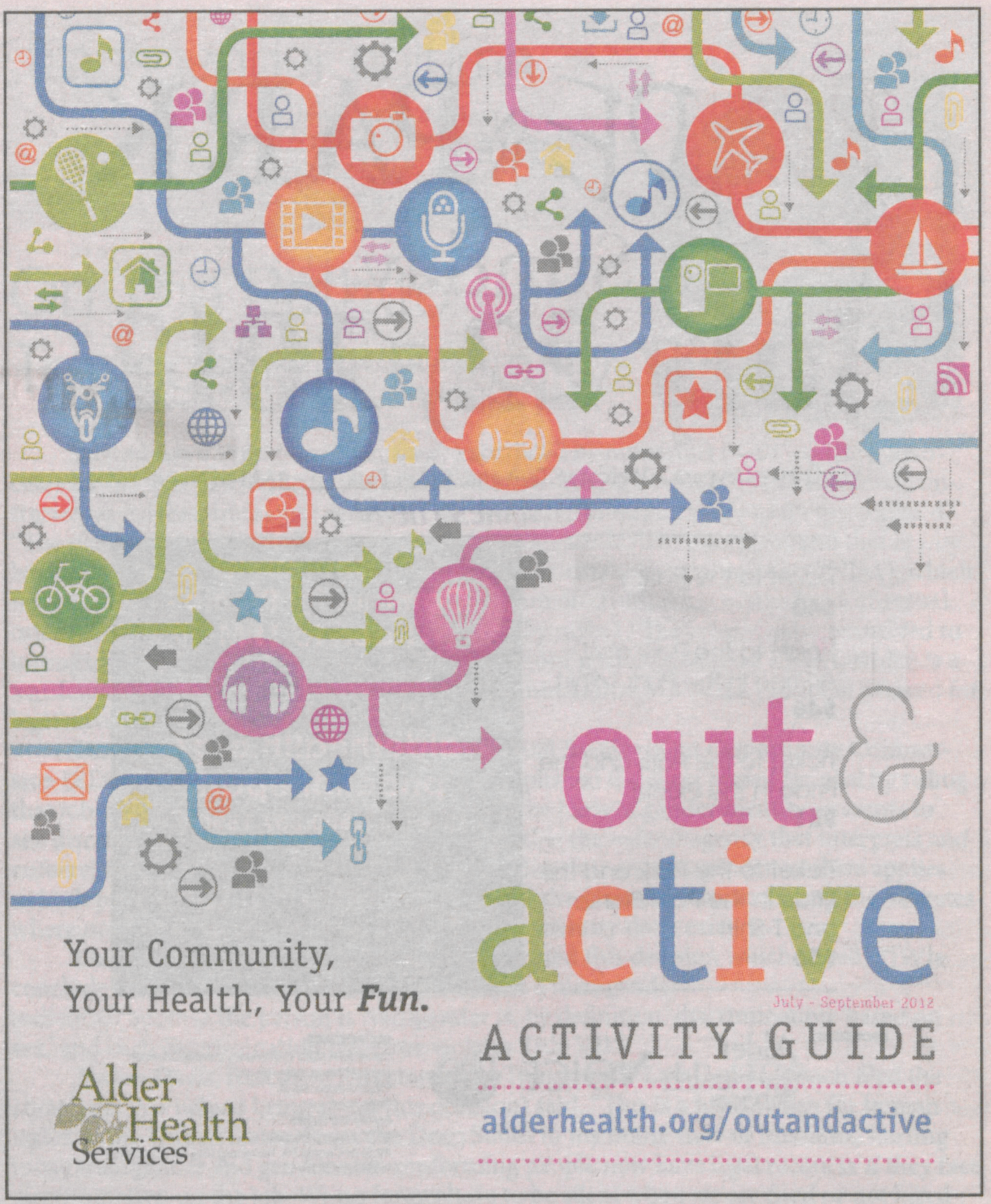
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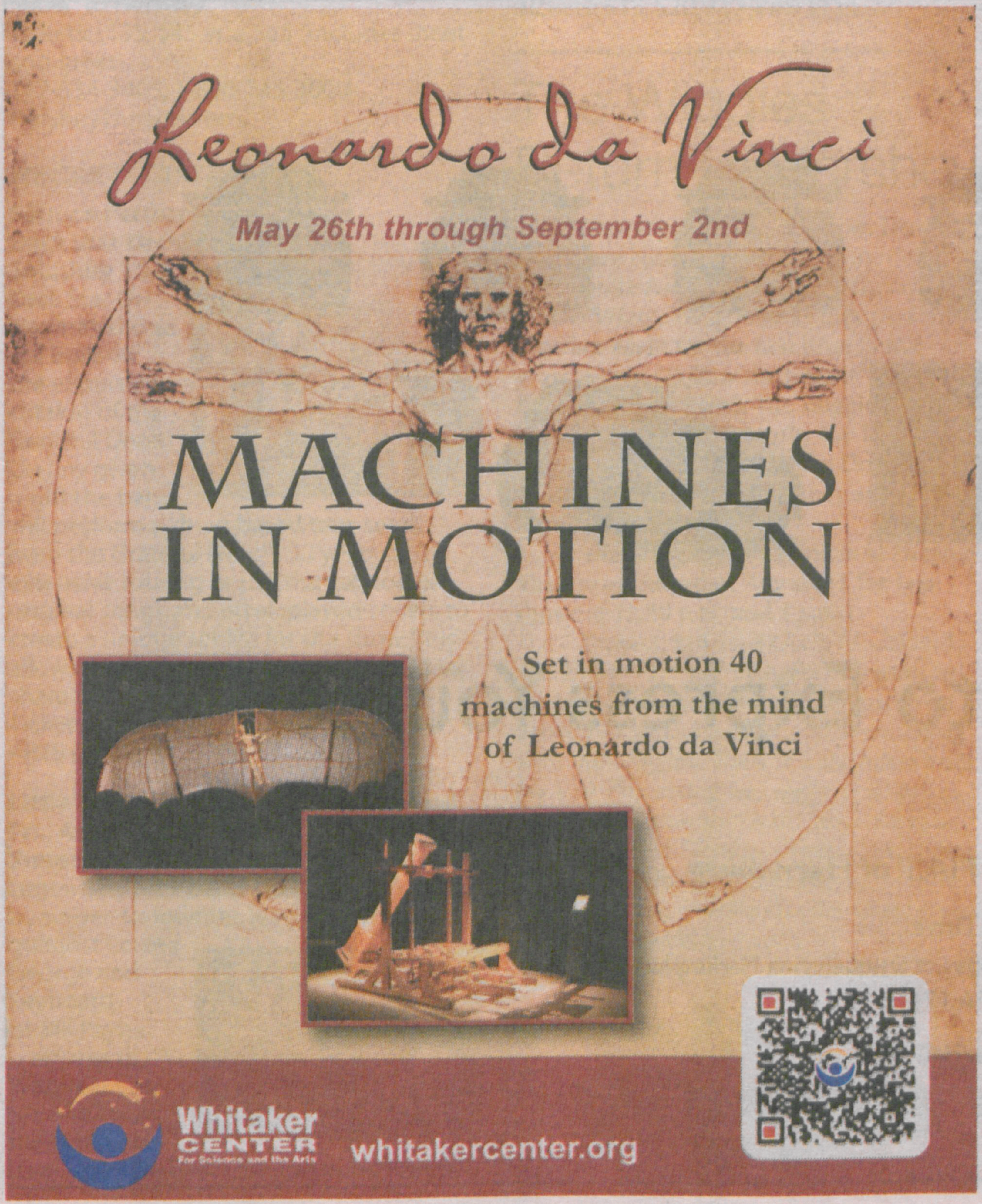
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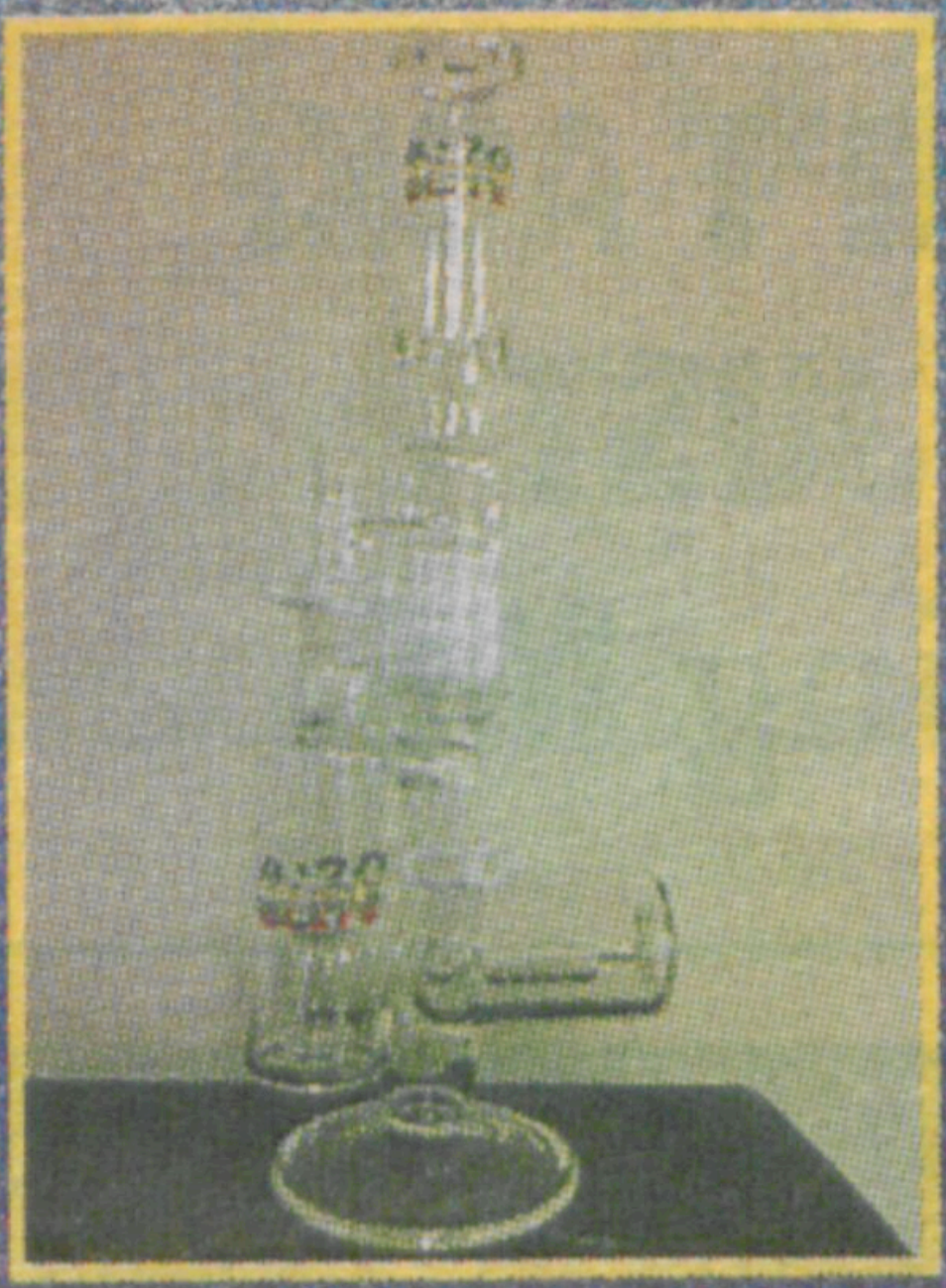

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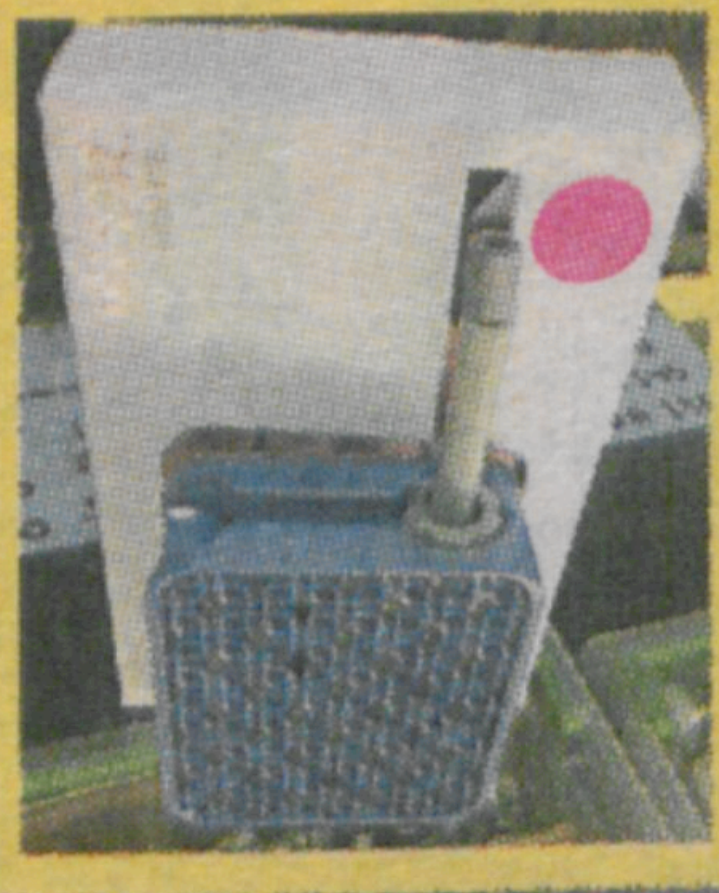

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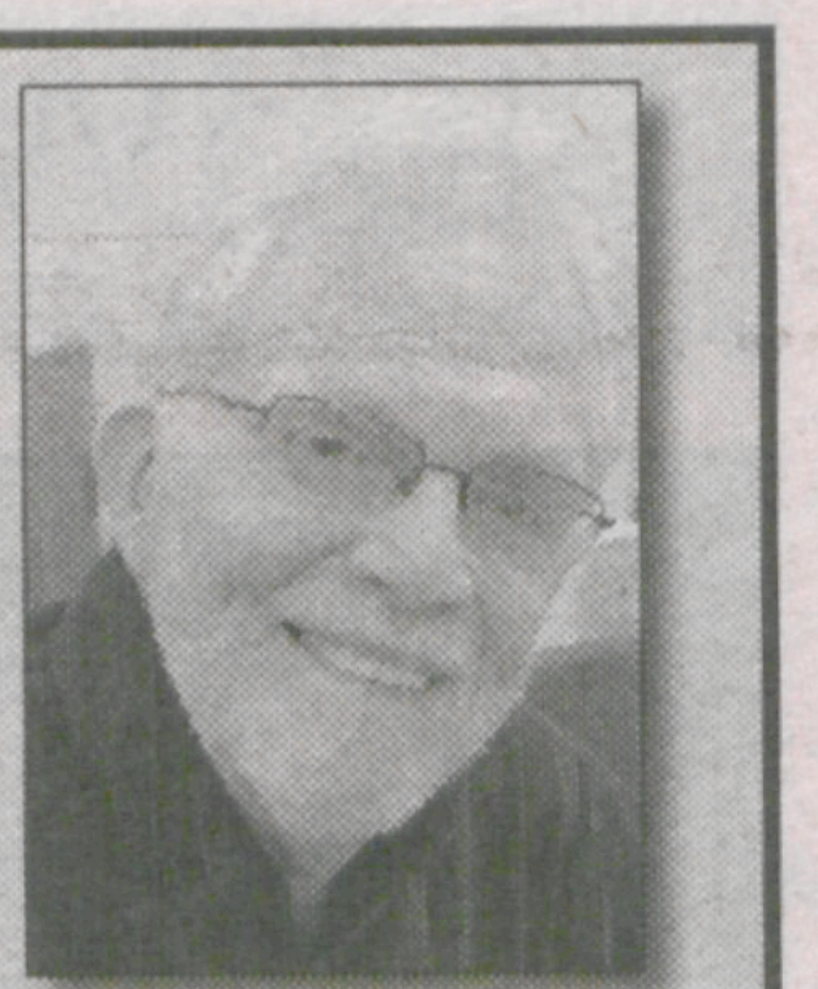
Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons



We've Come a Long Way, Baby

Pride Festival 2012 is a good time to talk about all the reasons we gather to affirm our common humanity and especially to celebrate how far we've come since the first Pride march in 1969. The year 1969? Wow—that was long time ago, and when you think of what led to that first march we really have something to celebrate.

Try to imagine a Stonewall riot happening today in New York City or Harrisburg—it makes the mind boggle. Gay bars, not to mention most area bars, are full of LGBTQ people and their allies, and trying to imagine a police raid on one of these places is not worth the trouble.

But more recent history, say, looking over the past 10 years, shows that we continue to make progress on many other fronts. The discussions and debates today are about marriage equality, inclusiveness in faith communities and how to eliminate the vestiges of discrimination in the U.S. military. The debates are on a much higher plane and deal with very complex issues, and the good news is that we have moved far beyond the turmoil of the 1970s and '80s.

The poll numbers showing increasing support for same-sex marriage are astonishing when you really think about it. When The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was passed in 1996, support was at 25 percent. Some polls in 2009-10 showed support at 40- 49 percent; in an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll this May 54 percent of respondents said they supported state laws legalizing same-sex marriage.

From 25 percent to 54 percent in 16 years—not bad! And Pew Research polling shows support going from 30-32 percent in 2003-04 to 45-47 percent in 2011-12, a huge gain in only nine years.

Now, in light of North Carolina's recent rejection we see that progress often is accompanied by backlash and that we need continued political activism to see DOMA and its offspring become a thing of the past. Apparently some folks still believe that marriage needs to be defended from all the loving gay and lesbian couples in our country, and organizations like The American Family Association (AFA) continue to hammer away at what they call "homosexual activism." Check out their website to see their entry about petitions calling on Home Depot to stop engaging in "the culture war." It seems the AFA wants the company to support only heterosexual homeowners, whose houses are apparently a cut above those in which LGBTQ folks live.

As I was writing this column a news item popped up on my computer: "Federal district appeals court rules DOMA unconstitutional." How serendipitous! (No, not ironic—let's try not to misuse that word.) Of course the ruling in Boston is another step in the right direction, and we will have to wait a while longer for DOMA to be put to the death it deserves. But it was nice to see this momentum as the column was being written.

It was back in the late '70s and early '80s that gay and lesbian students began to come out at HACC. I can clearly remember the first two gay men who came out to me, one a staff member on our student newspaper, the other a student in my summer literature class. And back then things were so tentative; in both situations, the men were not about to come out to the class or newspaper staff. They didn't want to take that risk, and with good reason.

By 1993 the campus had opened up to the point where our first Allies group was approved by our student government, and by 2000 we had a course in lesbian and gay studies in the curriculum. Just this spring we conducted our first Lavender Celebration, during which LGBTQ students were recognized for their academic achievements. Quite a change from the campus atmosphere that summer of 1980.

Our college and so many other institutions across the country are much safer for LGBTQ people than they were even 10 or 15 years ago, let alone back in the day. Not completely safe, no. Whereas our college, for example, is much more tolerant than it was in the past, we do have a way to go in moving to true affirmation and celebration.

And this brings us back to Pride. Today Pride celebrations are joyful events with the entire human community coming together to enjoy one another. People of all political and sociological backgrounds exchange hugs and kisses; children bounce around among the colorful variety of adult role models from A to Z.

Remember that old cigarette ad? Well, we've come a long way, baby!

Trum Simmons is senior professor of English at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) and adviser of The Fourth Estate, the Harrisburg campus student newspaper. He also advises HACC Allies, the LGBTQA student organization.

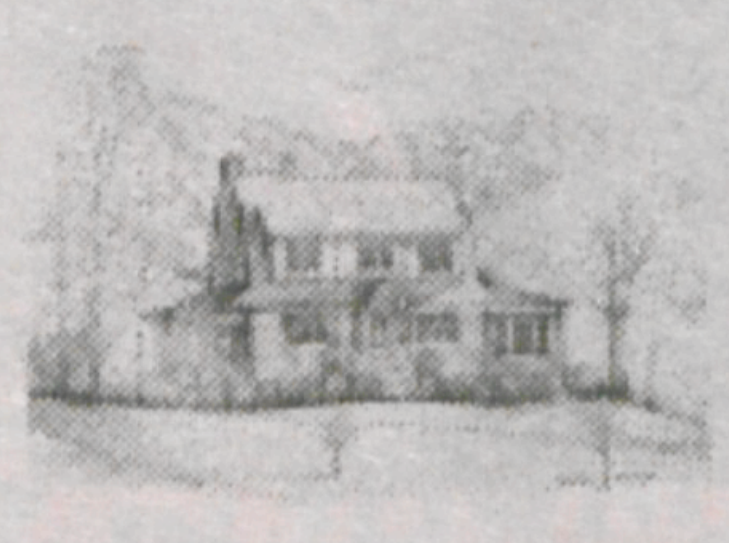
A Joyful Night in Harrisburg

Despite what seem like insurmountable financial troubles, residents of the city of Harrisburg June 2 made joyful noise in the form of song. Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit, Harrisburg hosted gospel singer Kenneith Perrin Midtown Scholar Bookstore hosted Good News Café, a group appearing the first Saturday of each month performing gospel, spoken word, and gospel.

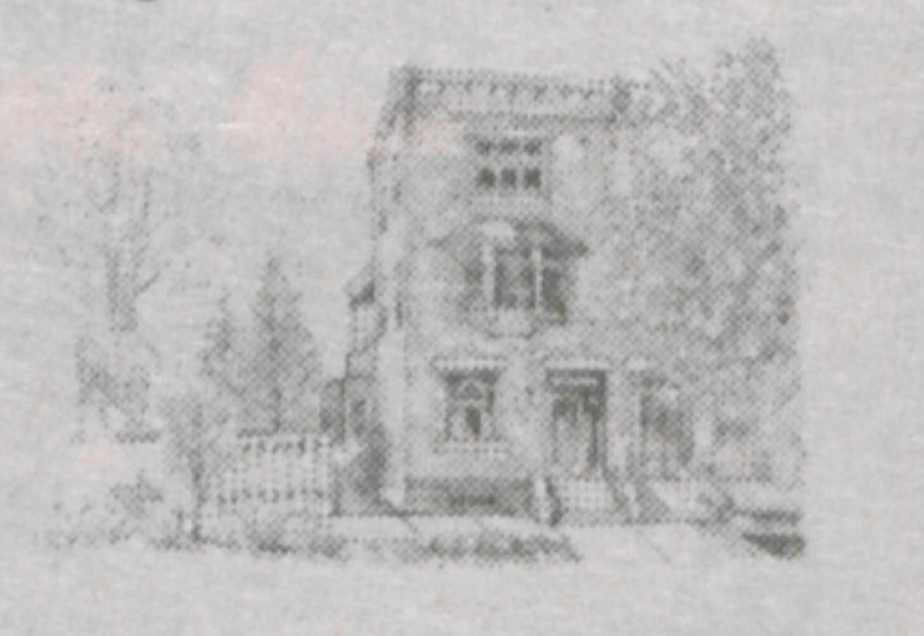
Central Voice Photos

Art Association Summer Art Soirees Announced

The Art Association presents six Summer Soirees at diverse locations and featuring an eclectic variety of great art. All soirees are on Saturdays from 5 – 8 p.m., and include hors d'ouevres and beverages. Tickets: $40, advance, $45, door. Three different soirees purchased with cash or credit card, $100.

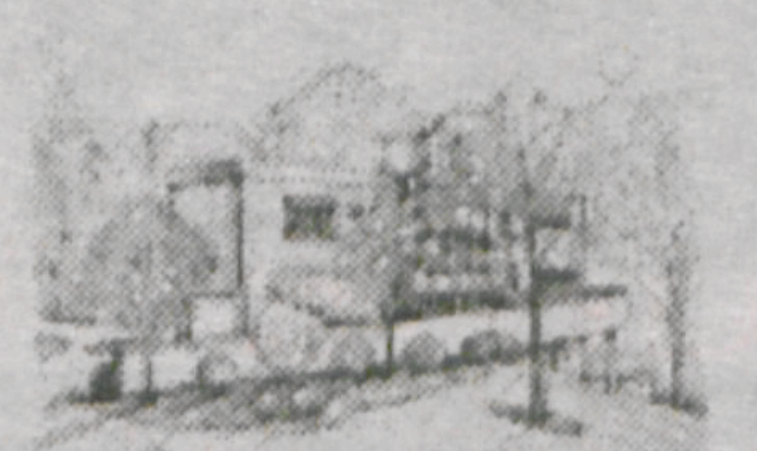


The first was held June 9 hosted by Mark Hughes and Dr. Kirsten Snow, with co-host David Volkman, at 2301 Oakwood Road, Bellevue Park, Harrisburg. Featured artists included: photographers Judge Jeannine Turgeon and Donna Curanzy-Seltzer, Thom Kulp with his colourful mixed media, and jeweler Diane Witcoski. The house was named "Open Door" by the people who commissioned it in 1926, because they enjoyed entertaining. "Open Door" is a prime example of Dutch Colonial Architecture that became popular in the early 1900's, as well as one of the approved design concepts for the homes of Bellevue Park.



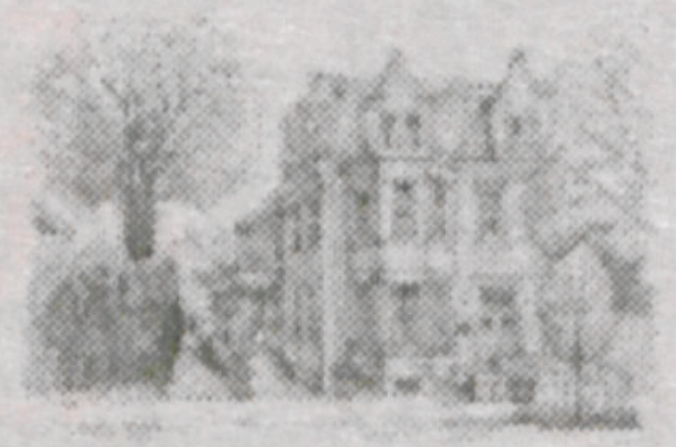
Chuck Schulz hosted the second event June 23 at his fin de siècle town home at 202 Kelker Street, which he is in the process of restoring. His large art collection includes paintings by Joseph Dudding and by Carrie Wissler-Thomas. Dudding displayed still-life and character studies, Wissler-Thomas showcased landscapes of the Susquehanna and Scotland. Schulz showed his own pen-and-ink prints.

July 21



On July 21, Kate Earley and Julia Liberatore will host the next Soiree at the Earleys' stunning contemporary home at 599 East Siddonsburg Road, Mechanicsburg. Featured artists will be landscape painter Dominick Brandt; figurative painter Chad Caldwell; Barry Ginder, whose paintings depict architectural space; and jeweler Adrienne Alaimo, a New York-based fashion artist. Barry Ginder's work captures fragments or glimpses of urban fabric and its sculptural edges, with a focus on material texture, transparency and depth, not only in the subject matter, but also in his technique of developing the painted surface.

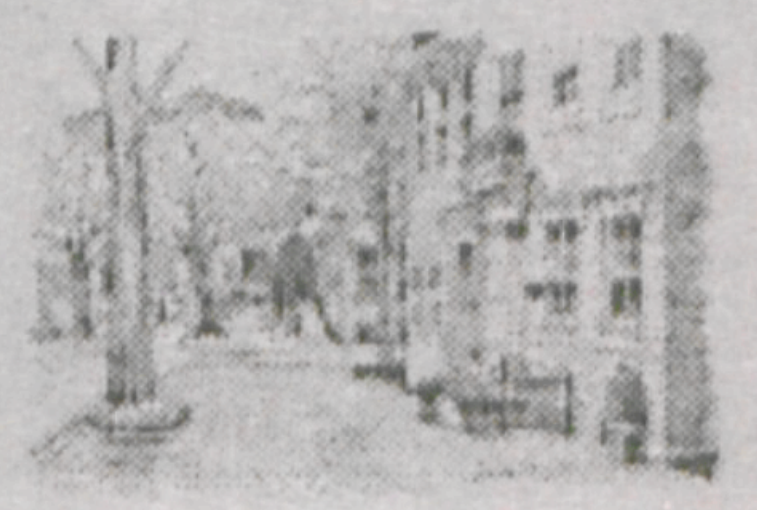
August 4



Tom Robel and David Volkman will co-host the August 4 Soiree at Tom's house at 1502 Green Street in Harrisburg, featuring landscapes by Paul Flury and abstract expressionist Tanade Suveepattananont.

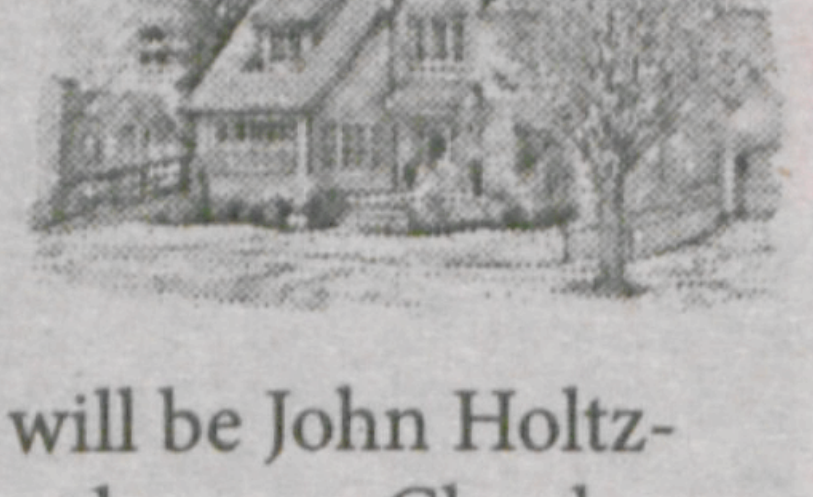
Tanade, originally of Thailand, says that he is a self-taught artist whose innate artistic talents have been tempered with divergent life experiences, ranging from spending time in a Buddhist monastery to corporate management. His use of bright colours and patterns in acrylics are inspired, he avers, by his early years in the Buawon monastery in Bangkok.

August 18



The fifth Soiree will be hosted by Kevin Hancock and Kevin Sheets on August 18 in their home at 802 Green Street in Harrisburg. The four featured artists are popular plein air painters Brian Eppley, Jonathan Frazier, David Henry and Steve Wetzel. The Hancock/Sheets house is a three-storey mid-19th-century row home, with a "relatively new, but growing collection of original paintings, many of which are plein air landscapes." The Soiree will be a patio party featuring jazz by Jimmy Wood, lots of farm-to-table summer dishes, and a Summer sangria.

August 25



The last Soiree in the series will be hosted by Ray Davis August 25 at his Tudor-Revival home in Uptown Harrisburg. Featured artists will be John Holtzman, contemporary landscapes; Chuck Acri, landscapes and outdoor figurative sculptures; and Andy Schaefer, industrial outdoor abstract metal sculptures. Music will be provided by keyboardist Jonathan Frazier and guitarist Rebecca Marie Miller. Summer salsas, sangria, margaritas and more will be served.

Tickets: www.artassocofhbg.com, 717-236-1432.

DON'T ASK. JUST .ning ME.

BlogWatch

By Greg King

My favorite blogs have grown fists recently with L O V E tattooed on the knuckles of one fist and H A T E on the other. These blogs seems to reflect the long waged brawl between stories of lgbt acceptance and stories of renewed bigotry. But what strikes me most besides the contrast in stories is the growing level of acceptance and support the gay community.

The top story is President Obama finally leaving the locker room, after years of shadow boxing, and finally entering the ring in support of same-sex marriage. Even though he took his time in coming around to full support, his recent statement is significant in many ways.

First, it is notable that Obama did not wait until after the election. From a purely political perspective, this can only mean that, for the first time in American politics, despite all the efforts of the opposition, same-sex marriage is a politically neutral or perhaps even a positive issue.

Second is the simple fact that where a good leader goes, others will follow. This is already borne out in poll numbers following the president's announcement which show rising support for same-sex marriage. This growing support is even apparent in the African American community which has long been thought to be unmovable on the issue.

The match continues with a right jab from Pastor Charles L. Worley of Providence Road Baptist Church in Maiden, North Carolina. "I figured a way to get rid of all the lesbians and queers," he said in his May 13 sermon: "Build a great, big, large fence - 150 or 100 mile long - put all the lesbians in there... Do the same thing for the queers and the homosexuals and have that fence electrified so they can't get out… And you know what, in a few years, they'll die."

Next, an attempted upper cut. Curtis Knapp, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Seneca, Kan., said homosexuals "should be put to death." Knapp continued in his sermon, "'Oh, so you're saying we should go out and start killing them.' No. — I'm saying the government should. They won't, but they should. You say, 'Oh, I can't believe you, you're horrible. You're a backwards Neanderthal of a person.' Is that what you're calling scripture? Is God a Neanderthal, backwards in his morality? Is it His word or not? If it's His word, he commanded it. It's His idea, not mine. And I'm not ashamed of it."

These punches have been delivered too many times in our world history against various peoples. It wouldn't matter if Pastors Worley and Knapp had L O V E tattooed on their fists, hate by any other name still delivers atrocity.

Thankfully love still stands in the ring. Erika Munson, a faithful Mormon Church member, has organized about a 100 fellow LDS Church members to march in Utah's annual Pride Parade. "We are following the greater commandment of Jesus, which is to love one another and love one another unconditionally, and we want to do that," said Munson in an interview with the local FOX 13 News. Parade organizers placed them at the front of the parade behind Dustin Lance Black, the parade's Grand Marshall and himself raised a Mormon. The group, called "Mormons Building Bridges" is hoping to reach out and encourage LDS members to "love thy neighbor," to tell lgbt people they are loved and accepted.

The Mormon group also hopes to help gay youth who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. "We know there has been such strife and heartbreak in the Mormon Church and the (lgbt) community, and we just want to reach out in love and say, 'We love you. We respect you for who you are. God loves you because of who you are, not in spite of who you are,'" she said.

This championship fight for the grand prize – who can deliver the most joyful or the most hateful expressions regarding the lgbt community - continues round after round. There are so many other hideous examples of hateful and joyful expressions from the past few months. The fists have been flying. It seems that the more love and acceptance there is, the more vocal and extreme the haters become in what they must secretly see as a last ditch effort. As we all know, at the end of the match, Love will stand victorious and Hate will lie on the mat weakened beyond the ability to connect one more punch.

Unfortunately, until that time, there is a recent report by The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Projects on 2011 statistics indicating that 30 lgbt people were murdered in hate crimes, more than in any year since the group began keeping records. The report also notes that organizations tracking these events were so overwhelmed with reports that they could not fully investigate every incident. Data collectors say there is no doubt the numbers are actually higher than reported.

Putting all this in perspective, it is important to recognize that sometimes, love begets hate. Perhaps even strengthens it. We must not waiver in the face of our opponent's hysteria driven combat. With that perspective, and in the spirit of Pride Season, let's all vow to tattoo L O V E on both our fists, remain standing proudly in the ring and remember what Dr. Martin Luther King knew as truth: "When people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory."

Now is the time to sacrifice as our forbearers did to get us this far. Donate your time, money, and resources. Stand up and be proudly counted. Meet your neighbors, family and associates and be known so you can be loved.

"Let us rise up tonight with a greater readiness. Let us stand with a greater determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge to make America what it ought to be. We have an opportunity to make America a better nation." - MLK

CREEP OF THE WEEK:
Tony Perkins

By D'Anne Witkowski

I wince every time I see Tony Perkins's face on TV. Perkins, the president of the vehemently anti-gay Family Research Council, often has a microphone shoved in his face whenever there's a marriage equality story. It's as if newsrooms across the country feel compelled to "balance" these stories by calling Perkins to argue against any and all humanity afforded to homos.

Invariably Perkins spews misinformation. Sadly, his statements often go unchallenged. Ideally you shouldn't be able to go on TV and make claims that have absolutely no support without bullshit being called. But that's not the world we live in, which is why people like Perkins are interviewed at all.

> ***The voice that isn't counted, however, belongs to the "don't-give-a-shits," sometimes referred to in classier circles as the "moveable middle."***

So bravo to CNN's Brooke Baldwin for not allowing her on-air time with Perkins to be monopolized by his baseless rhetoric. On May 24, Baldwin interviewed Perkins regarding President Obama and Colin Powell declaring that they were cool with marriage equality.

Perkins is, unsurprisingly, not happy about two prominent black men saying such things. After all, the largely white evangelical right wing that Perkins speaks for tries very hard to bond with black religious leaders through a mutual dislike of homosexuals. In fact, the first thing Perkins mentions to Baldwin is that he's in D.C. with a bunch of pissed-off black pastors. He says, "A lot of these African American pastors are saying look, 'Marriage is very clearly described in the Bible.' The president has basically drawn a line in the sand and said, 'Hey, are you gonna cross it?' And these pastors are gonna cross it."

Perkins goes on to say it doesn't matter what Obama said because Americans are squarely against him on this issue "based on the polling data."

Baldwin then points out that, actually, the most recent polling data puts support for marriage equality at 53%. "Most people in the country don't agree with you," she says. Perkins dismisses it all outright. The only number that really matters, he says, is 30: the number of states that have passed anti-gay marriage amendments.

Except that isn't the only number that matters. The lesbian and gay civil rights movement is moving so rapidly that the number of people who support equality rises daily. Were we to "do over" many of the statewide votes that resulted in anti-gay "victories" we wouldn't win them all, mind you, but the number of people voting against equality would be much lower. So when Perkins points to the number 30 he's staking his claim on a moving target.

I'm no Nate Silver, but it's important to look at who votes in many of these elections. Marriage equality brings out people with strong feelings. Especially on the anti-gay side. The voice that isn't counted, however, belongs to the "don't-give-a-shits," sometimes referred to in classier circles as the "moveable middle." I strongly suspect that folks who don't feel like they have any skin in this game (literally) would be much more inclined to tell a pollster that marriage equality should be legal than rush out on their lunch break to their polling place to fill out a ballot.

The most telling part of the Baldwin/Perkins exchange is when she asks him if he's ever been in the home of a married gay couple. He says no. She then asks what he would say to such a couple re: his views that their marriage harms society. Perkins dodges the question, basically saying that this issue is about public policy, not people. If this sounds strange, it should. After all, without people you wouldn't be able to make, nor would you need to make, public policy. It's just that Perkins doesn't count lesbians and gays as people.

Midtown Scholar Bookstore Commemorates Hurricane Agnes

Last month Midtown Scholar Bookstore commemorated the 40th Anniversary of the HurricaneAgnes with a panel discussion.

Author of "Waterproof," Judith Coopey talked about the historical circumstances of the 1889 Johnstown Flood. She read selections from her novel, shared experiences researching life in 1880s-1930s Johnstown, discussed the challenges of writing historical fiction, and answer audience members' questions.

Harrisburg historian Jeb recounted the transformation of the capital region in the aftermath of 1972's Agnes Flood.

Eminent playwright and cultural scholar Lenwood Sloan examined the legacies of race and migration in New Orleans after 2004's Hurricane Katrina.

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Chamber on the move

By Bill Krenz

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The Value of Chamber Membership

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Hava Pell, board member and chair, membership committee, is currently working to outline the value of being a member of our chamber.

Pell said, 'The more I research membership discounts, the more I uncover!"

While we have discounts from local businesses, chamber members also are eligible for national discounts from its affiliation with the NGLCC,National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

Pell is currently working to document and highlight these discounts.

"What I thought would be a quick few hour assignment is turning into a major undertaking, which is a good problem to have," Pell said.

Discounts

Some examples of the discounts available to chamber members include:

- Best Western Premier the Central Hotel and Conference Center in Union Deposit: $70 room rate (usually $99-$210)
- Mary Jane Wertz at The Trophy House has raised her discount to 15%
- Amber Grunden with Comcast Business Class offers a 2% discount per contract
- Deb McClain, Hava Pell, MassMutual/Ufinancial offer no cost needs analysis and 15% discount on Long Term Care insurance, 45% total discount when domestic partners apply together, 10% discount on Life and Disability when partners apply together
- The Paper Lion Gallery in Lemoyne offers a 10% discount
- Through a collaborative effort with the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and CREDC, our members can participate in Penn National Insurance Companies Business Insurance Program with a potential for a group dividend on premiums paid. Last year participants received a 17% dividend return on their insurance premiums.
- In addition there is small business support and consultations available to businesses through the Harrisburg Regional Chamber.

All of these discounts will be on the website by July 15 and will be printed in a glossy brochure to be handed out at all our events.

Past Events:

The Paper Lion Gallery hosted another fabulous mixer at their amazing gallery in Lemoyne, co-sponsored by the Lemoyne Business Association.

They were pleased to feature in their expanded space two in-house artists, David K and Martin Velez.

On June 12, Chamber newcomer Zynski Massage and Aromatherapy Center hosted their mixer. Donna Opuszysnki and Pam Hirschhorn ran the event and highlighted their massage therapy experience, as well as featured soy candles with essential oils and unusual scents such as 'leather jacket'.

The chamber also participated in the 2012 Celebrate Diversity Networking Reception held at the Crowne Plaza in Harrisburg, which was promoted by both the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and Dauphin County. The chamber was featured, along with other minority and ethnic chamber groups.

The chamber participated in the ever-growing Lancaster Pride event.

Upcoming Events:

The chamber is very pleased to announce a mixer for the grand opening location of the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania at its new location on North 3rd Street in Harrisburg on July 17.

Tour the new facility and continue to support this fantastic organization.

The Chamber's August mixer is still in final planning stages so be sure to check the chamber's web site for more details.

If you don't receive an email reminder on the upcoming mixers, make sure you email us at info@cpglcc.org.

CPGLCC is gearing up for full participation in Harrisburg for Pride in July.

Please make sure you check out our table at Pride and get information on various LGBT and Allied businesses in the area.

Education:

Deborah Gable continues with the planning of a panel of speakers to meet with our regional youth programs.

Chamber members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender who are interested in volunteering for the panel can contact Gable at dgable@cpglcc.org for more information and meeting dates.

This is a wonderful opportunity to share life experiences with high school and col-

continued on page 32

Voices United 7: Choral Celebration of Pride July 27

Voices United 7: Choral Celebration of Pride is slated for Fri, July 27, 8 p.m. at Market Square Presbyterian Church, 20 S. 2nd St., Harrisburg, the night preceding the Pride Festival of Central PA parade and festival held the next day along the Susquehanna River.

The concert is presented by the Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, Central PA Womyn's Chorus and the Spirit Choir of MCC of the Spirit, Harrisburg. Admission is $15

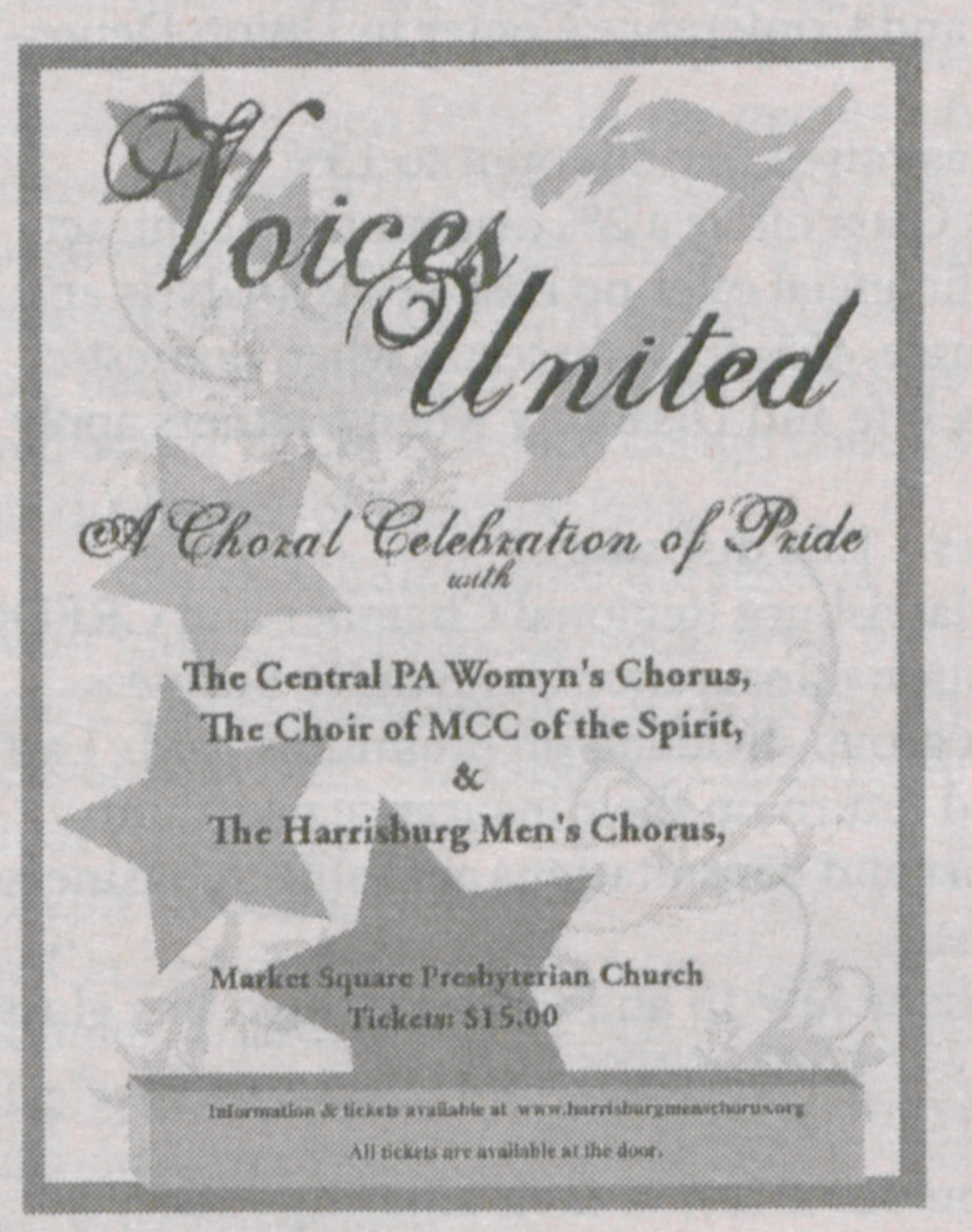
Info: http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org; 717-236-3809

Voices United is a showcase for the various LGBTQ and Allied Choruses of the Harrisburg area. It is an evening of music that expresses the deepest sentiments of the individual groups that comprise the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning communities and explores our common experiences with our Straight allies. Voices United is a musical celebration of all that Pride has come to mean in the Central Pennsylvania area.

Why concert?

The choral families of the area had long tried to play a more integral role in the Pride Festivities but found it daunting to try to produce a good choral sound in an outdoor setting. In spite of the best attempts of sound technicians, it remained difficult to hear and be heard, to blend or to give a truly first rate performance. In 2006, the same year as the first Pride Parade, the Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus came upon the idea of assembling all of the area choirs together to give a major indoor concert on the eve of the Pride Festival, setting a celebratory tone for the whole weekend. Each group would have a small solo concert section and then all the singers would band together to create a 'joyful noise' to herald the start of the Festival. The first concert was held at the Theatre Harrisburg Production Center and four other choruses participated along with the Men's Chorus including The Central PA Womyn's Chorus, The Spirit Choir of MCC of the Spirit, The Unisingers of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg and The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus. Three hours after it started the walls of the production center resonated with the sound of one hundred and twenty voices followed by a standing ovation.

For the following years, the formula was repeated but it was refined and tightened so that today, Voices United is performed in just over two hours with only the four City Choruses and is hosted by the Market Square Presbyterian Church. And this year will mark David Walker's, the artistic director for the Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus, final appearance directing the choir. We will still be making that 'joyful noise' to celebrate our Pride in ourselves, our families, our friends and our community.


Voices United
7

A Choral Celebration of Pride
with

The Central PA Womyn's Chorus,
The Choir of MCC of the Spirit,
&
The Harrisburg Men's Chorus,

Market Square Presbyterian Church
Tickets: $15.00

Information & tickets available at www.harrisburgmenschorus.org
All tickets are available at the door.

your voice

PA Legislature Needs to Wake Up

*Submitted by Andrew P. Smith,
Central Voice Reader*

I would like to point out something about our neighboring state of Maryland. Maryland has now legalized same-sex marriage although it is subject to referendum in November. Also in recent years Maryland has granted protection to gays in public accommodations, employment, and housing.

Pennsylvania granted equal access to public accommodations to racial, religious, and ethnic minorities in 1939. Maryland did not do so until 1963, 24 years later. It would appear that Pennsylvania is falling behind on the matter of equality for its gay and lesbian citizens and has yet to pass a law.

Delaware, which did not grant equal civil rights to racial minorities until 1961, also recently passed a comprehensive gay civil rights law last year. It includes civil unions.

Of the states surrounding Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, DC now have laws protecting their gay and lesbian citizens. Ohio and West Virginia do not. It's time that Pennsylvania legislators recognize what is happening.

If not, they may soon be voted out of office. We need to organize for our rights and stop regressive groups like The Tea Party.

Chamber

continued from page 31

lege aged youth who are involved in Common Roads, a program of the LGBT Community Center and The Curve, a program of Planned Parenthood of Central PA.

The Education Committee is exploring additional topics such as social media, business development, and non-profit organizational development.

Remember: Please register for events at the www.cpglcc.org or to host an event for the few remaining dates in 2012 or for 2013 - contact Seth Hamill at shamill@cpglcc.org.

Info: www.cpglcc.org<http://www.cpglcc.org.

Equality Pennsylvania and SEIU Advance Strategic Partnership

Coming one year after their first successful agreement to form a closer working partnership, Equality Pennsylvania (EQPA) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have agreed upon additional ways to strengthen and advance their strategic partnership.

"Over the past year, experience has shown us that we need to continue building political infrastructure across the state," explained EQPA board president, Adrian Shanker. "We cannot win equal rights for the LGBT community in Pennsylvania without the support from our brothers and sisters from Labor. SEIU's previous support allowed us to grow into a statewide organization, I am so thankful to SEIU for their continued support this year"

Labor unions stand as an important line of defense against workplace discrimination for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) workers and serve as a strong voice for equality. SEIU takes this responsibility very seriously, being the largest union in the country and one led by Mary Kay Henry, a member of the LGBT community.

The new phase of the partnership comes with a $20,000 grant to EQPA from SEIU and together the organizations have agreed to continue promoting activism for labor campaigns and local issues within the LGBT Community; to share an organizer; and to help establish SEIU's Pennsylvania Lavender Caucus. EQPA will also work with the SEIU to convene a table of representatives of organized labor with the express goal of understanding how to ensure proper and full protections and coverage for LGBT workers during negotiations and in final contract language.

"Equality and freedom from discrimination are the keys to empowering LGBT workers and SEIU is proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with our strategic partner, Equality Pennsylvania, in our joint struggle for a more just state" remarked Adanjesus Marin, Executive Board member of SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania and longtime EQPA Board member.

The grant from the SEIU will also support EQPA's political efforts, and assist in helping to build a different model for how labor and the LGBT movement can work together against attacks in the General Assembly, in the media and ultimately at the ballot box. This unique collaboration takes shape as both movements begin a new year laced with many challenges.

Equality Pennsylvania is the statewide voice for LGBT Equality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and works collaboratively to establish a comprehensive network of individuals and organizations united in securing equal rights for the LGBT community. For more information: www.equalitypa.org. Equality Pennsylvania is a proud member of the Equality Federation.

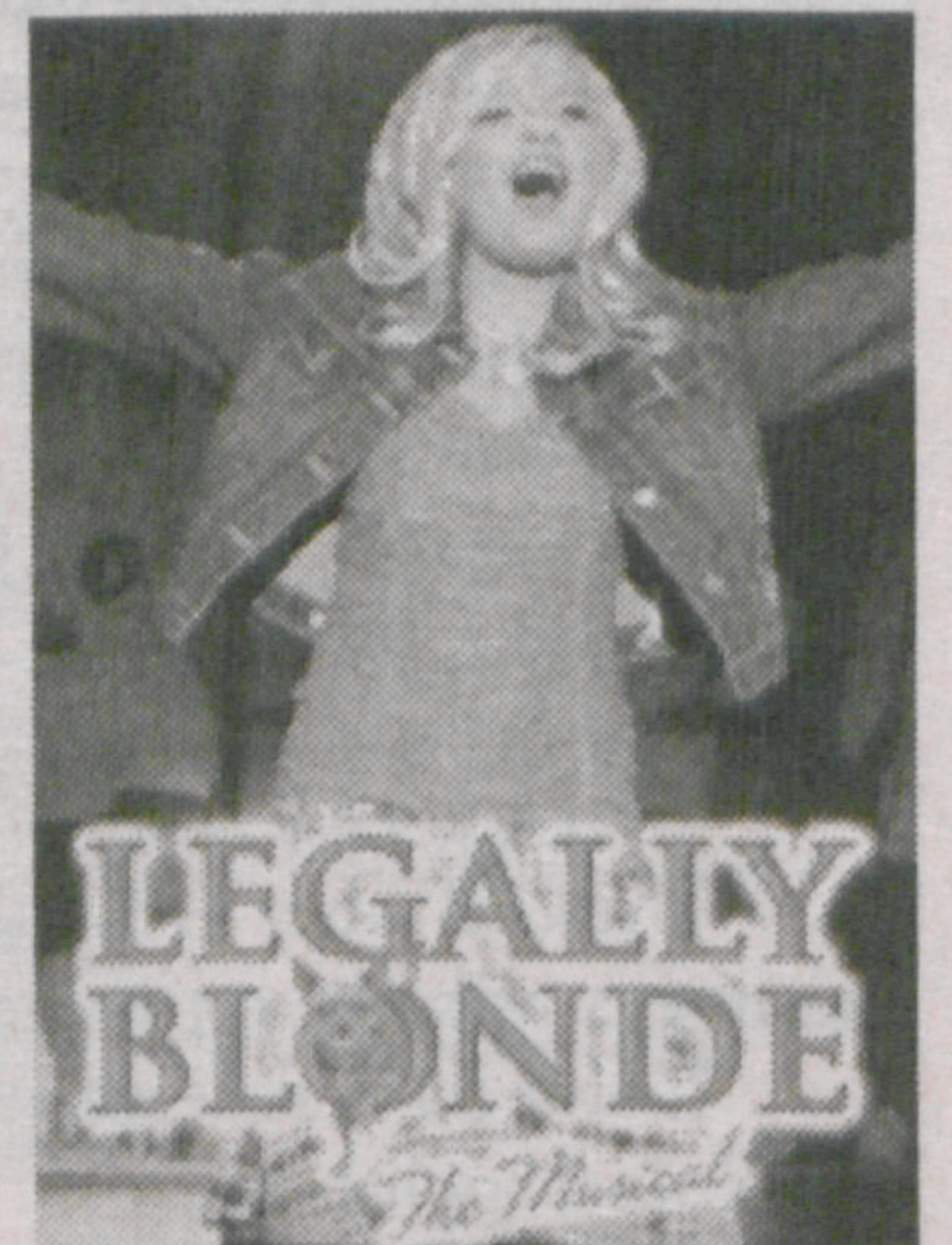
Dutch Apple to Stage Musical "Legally Blonde"

Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre is like totally going blonde with Legally Blonde, the Musical playing June 21-August 4. The new smash hit musical is based on the hilarious 2001 movie of the same title that starred Reese Witherspoon.

Elle Woods is a popular sorority girl whose favorite past times are shopping, planning mixers and her adorable dog, Bruiser. This underestimated blonde doesn't take no for an answer, so when her boyfriend dumps her for someone more "serious," Elle puts down the credit card, hits the books, and sets out to go where no Delta Nu has gone before: Harvard Law.

Legally Blonde is directed by Seth Reines. You may have seen Seth's work in numerous productions for Dutch Apple including the recent hits The Full Monty, Camelot, All Shook Up and The Wedding Singer. Choreography is by choreographer, Amy Marie McCleary, who most recently directed and choreographed 9 to 5, The Musical.

Maris Fernandez is excited to reprise her role as Elle Woods as she previously played the role at the Broadway Palm West in Arizona. Born in Texas and raised in Arizona, Maris graduated from Arizona State University and the Barrett Honors College with a Bachelor of Music in Music Theatre Performance in 2010. Her recent credits include Logainne in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Sound of Music, Seussical, Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty at the Broadway Palm West. She has also performed in Les Miserables at Phoenix Theatre, as Maggie in Lend Me a Tenor and Bye, Bye Birdie at Arizona Broadway Theatre.



Trans Women Wins Right to Mammogram

Beth Scott

The Transgender Defense and Education Fund recently announced resolution of claim on behalf of Beth Scott, a 44-year-old transgender woman in New Jersey who had been denied health insurance coverage for a mammogram.

Scott underwent the mammogram in June 2010 at her doctor's recommendation. Aetna denied coverage for the mammogram on the grounds that it fell under her policy's exclusion for treatments "related to changing sex." As a transgender woman, Scott was assigned male at birth and developed breasts after undergoing hormone therapy. Aetna refused to alter its position throughout the lengthy appeals process.

TLDEF intervened and argued that Aetna's interpretation of the policy exclusion was overbroad and that it should apply only to treatments prescribed to change an individual's sex characteristics. Because a mammogram is a procedure that has nothing to do with changing sex characteristics, Scott's mammogram should have been covered. Aetna's interpretation could have led to the continued denial of claims for medically necessary care for transgender patients, including treatment for conditions such as breast cancer.

Aetna reversed its position and paid for Ms. Scott's mammogram in full. It agreed that the policy exclusion for transgender health care will apply only to treatments prescribed to change an individual's sex characteristics, and not to any other medically necessary care. Additionally, Scott secured changes to the health plan ensuring that transgender people can access all necessary sex-specific care, such as prostate exams and gynecological care, regardless of whether they are categorized as male or female in insurance records. Many transgender people have claims rejected when an insurance company asserts that the procedure is not covered because it does not match the sex listed in the policyholder's records. The plan will also allow individuals to correct the sex on their insurance records by presenting an updated ID such as a driver's license, passport or birth certificate.

"I was denied access to the same health care benefits that my co-workers receive," Ms. Scott said. "While I'm hopeful that my employer will soon eliminate the transgender health exclusion altogether, I'm relieved to know that the existing exclusion can no longer be used to unfairly deny me other needed health care like a cancer screening just because I'm transgender."

Safe-school Hotline Bill Sent to House

H.B. 1078, a safe-schools bill introduced by state Rep. Margo Davidson, D-Delaware, was recently sent to the full House of Representatives by unanimous vote of the Education Committee.

Davidson's bill requires the state Education Department to set up a telephone hotline through which students, parents and others could safely and anonymously report school threats and potential violent situations involving schools to the appropriate authorities.

Similar programs exist in more than a dozen states, including Alabama, Colorado and Michigan. In Mississippi alone, the hotline has resulted in the recovery of 14 illegal handguns.

"In other states, these hotlines have been successful in not only the prosecution of school-related crime, but also in preventing school crime or violence. Prevention is, of course, the best outcome," Davidson said.

Colorado started its hotline in 1999, the year of the Columbine school attack. Since inception, Colorado has received more than 3,000 calls, 744 resulted in investigation, early intervention and prevention, led to 84 arrests, 382 counseling referrals, 343 school disciplinary actions and 328 prevention intervention plans. The Colorado hotline also lists among its accomplishments 27 prevented school attacks.

Equality PA Prexy to Attend Democratic National Convention

Democrats in Lehigh, Northampton, Berks, Lebanon, and Dauphin counties voted to send Equality Pennsylvania's President, Adrian Shanker, to the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. Shanker was elected as an Alternate Delegate committed to Barack Obama. Shanker, age 25, will be joined by Mark Segal and Mindy Posoff of Philadelphia and Gary Van Horn of Allegheny County as openly gay delegates at the DNC. There is an effort this year, supported by 22 Senate Democrats, to include marriage equality in the party platform.

PA Diversity Network Bestows Awards

Pennsylvania Diversity Network on June 14 honored recipients of the 2012 Lehigh Valley LGBT Community Awards. Keynote speaker was Brian Sims, who is poised to become the state's first openly gay legislator.

Award recipients were honored for their contributions:

Easton City Councilman, Honorable Mike Fleck

For sponsorship, leadership, and extensive work on the passage of Easton's Domestic Partner benefits bill for same-sex partners of city employees.

Timothy Hahn

For mobilization of his college GSA at ESU, and extensive fundraising for the community.

Corey Horvath

For extensive volunteer work on the successful passage of Bethlehem's fully inclusive anti-discrimination ordinance and for years of community service to the Lehigh Valley LGBT Community.

Hon. William Reynolds & Hon. Karen Dolan, Bethlehem City Council members

For their active and supportive work in passing Bethlehem's anti-discrimination ordinance, and their successful efforts in blocking amendments that would have lessened discrimination protections.

Mr. Joe's Chimney Sweep

For generous long-time commitment to support and development for many LGBT service organizations and mainstream health organizations in the Lehigh Valley.

United Friends School

For serious and successful efforts to stop bullying before it happens. And for a curriculum that is not only fully inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity but fully committed to teaching youth how to pass non-discrimination legislation that is fully inclusive of LGBT rights.

Pennsylvania Diversity Network is a volunteer, LGBT advocacy organization. www.PADiversity.org

TALKING POINTS: What Do You Say to Legislators?

Equality Pennsylvania

Submitted by Equality PA

Equality PA spearheads many lgbt civil rights initiatives across the state.

Recently, they brought to Central Voice's attention an issue that hasn't received much coverage. The "talking points" help with answering the question: What do you say to legislators?

Today

Today in Pennsylvania, when a married person dies, their spouse pays no state inheritance tax. When a person in a same-sex relationship dies, the surviving partner has to pay 15% tax on all inherited assets including some large ticket items like half of the market value of their house. To say the least, this is a terrible financial burden. Couple this with newly doubled household expenses and emotional grief and you have a recipe for disaster. Remember too, that this amounts to tens of thousands of dollars that opposite sex married couples do not have to pay.

Change?

This unequal situation can be changed, and there is legislation currently pending in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to do just that. EQPA encourages you to contact your House member - http://hq-equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35029/getLocal.jsp) and tell them to support and cosponsor House Bill 1828. This important legislation is an amendment to the Tax Reform Code of 1971 that allows Pennsylvania citizens who are in a relationship of mutual interdependence to pay the same inheritance tax on property that a married couple does (currently 0%). This bill is a matter of simple fairness.

Say?

Use these Talking Points:

1. The current inheritance tax lax laws are unfair. It is not right that some households do not have to pay any inheritance tax based on familial status while others must pay 15%. House Bill 1828 corrects this inequality by treating all families equally.

2. When two people own a house together, they both own it 100% and are both 100% responsible for its maintenance. But under current tax laws when a same-sex owner dies, it treats the same-sex survivor as a 50% owner. This makes no sense.

3. A survivor now has to live without their lost partner's income. Their household expenses are now double. The same-sex survivor must pay thousands of dollars of inheritance tax on a home that they have been paying taxes on the whole time.

4. Money spent on taxes are funds that could be used to maintain a home. Lack of maintenance eventually impacts the property values of a neighborhood as well as removes disposable income that could be spent supporting the local and state economies.

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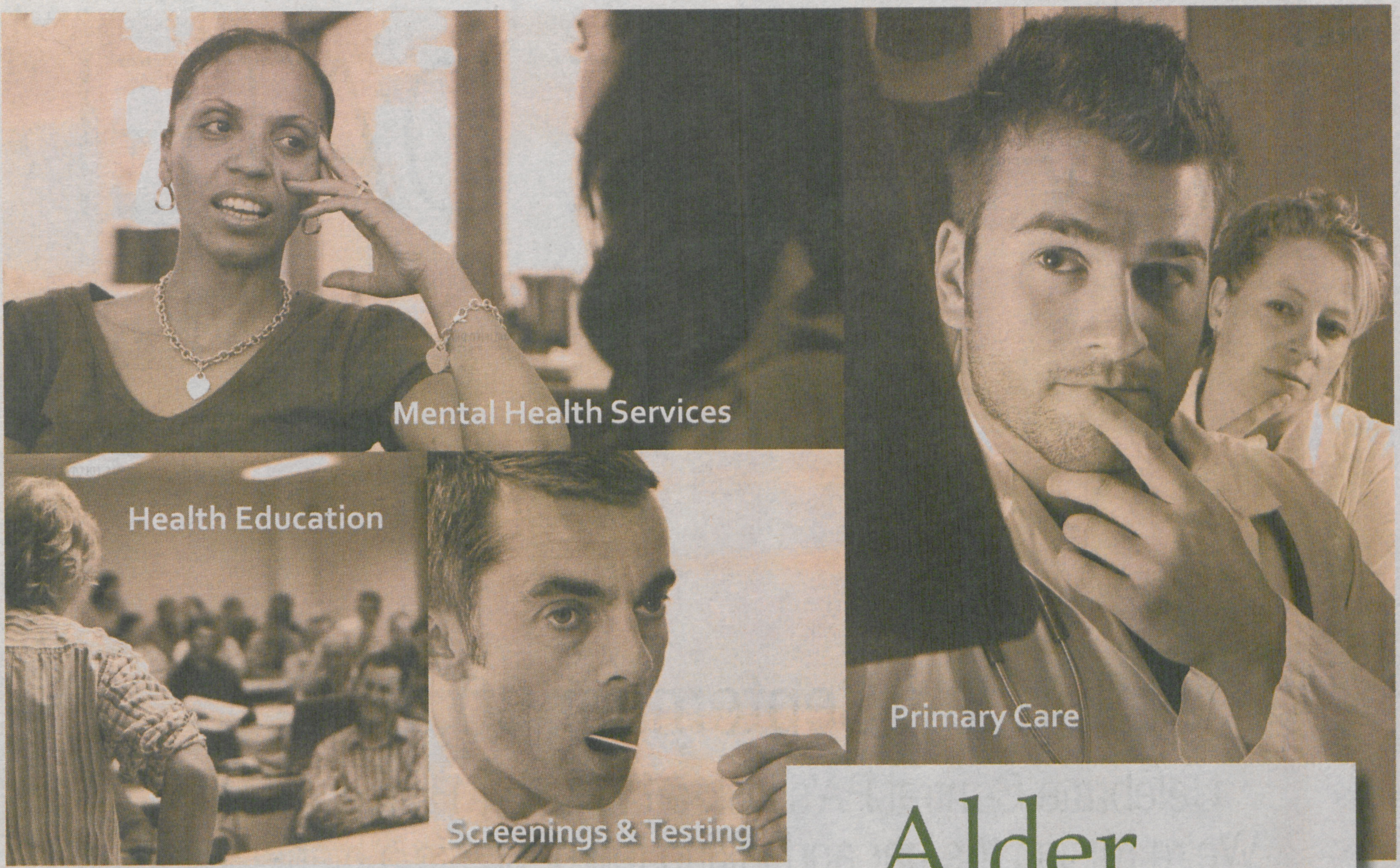
Outgoing State Rep. Josephs Proposes Exemption

Outgoing state Rep. Babette Josephs, D-Phila., has proposed legislation (H.B. 1828) exempting domestic partners from paying state inheritance taxes. "I believe that the institution of marriage is sacred and quite special; however, there are many traditional couples who are in deeply committed relationships, but for personal reasons, choose not to enter into the institution of marriage.

Other couples are prevented by law from marriage because of their gender," Josephs said. "Nevertheless, both types of these domestic partnership arrangements do not preclude a committed, loving and monogamous relationship. Current state law victimizes surviving partners of committed couples by subjecting them to a significant financial burden while he or she is also experiencing the emotional trauma of a loved one's passing.

Josephs' legislation defines domestic partnership as a relationship not defined by marriage or a civil union, but one where the two people agree to mutual interdependence and take responsibility for the maintenance and support of the other.



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Health Education

For more information call **1.800.867.1550**
or visit **www.ALDERHEALTH.org**

Alder Health Services is dedicated to improving the health of individuals living with HIV/AIDS, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and transgender community and those struggling with addiction in South Central Pennsylvania. The organization provides residents of the community with: • HIV/AIDS Services and Prevention Programming • Primary Medical Care • Mental Health Counseling Services • STD Screening and Treatment • HIV Testing • Community Health Education Forums and Workshops
All HIV-related services are provided at no-cost to the participant. Primary medical care and mental health counseling services are available on a sliding fee scale. While many insurance plans are accepted, insurance is not necessary to access the services of Alder Health.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday. Sunset.

SunDance

Sunday, September 30, 2012

Celebrate Central PA's kick-off to LGBT History month.
We're raising the bar and taking tea dance to a higher level!

Dancing as the sun sets!
Join old & new friends in a celebration of our community at an incredible downtown Lancaster outdoor location. (weather permitting) Fire Island inspired!
Unique location! Fantastic Cuban-fusion Fare! Delicious Drinks!
Proceeds benefit Alder Health Services and the LGBT Community Center.

Featuring DC's hottest DJ;
David Merrill

AMAZING DOWNTOWN LANCASTER OUTDOOR URBAN LOCATION!!

For more information please visit: www.Facebook.com/DonaldBlylerEvents

Another great event by DONALD BLYLER III Events!